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The Freda Kirchwey I Knew
CAREY McWILLIAMS

Discontented, Mistrustful, Fragmented
THE REAL DANGER IN ALIENATION
James D. Wright

NUCLEAR ENERGY: A PROBLEM, NOT AN ANSWER
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As We Were Saying
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LETTERS

Asia in history

Washington, D.C.

Alexander Woodside in "American Attitudes Toward History" [*The Nation*, Dec. 13], has turned a complicated and important problem into merely the latest in that no longer enlightening series of articles telling us that Americans are stupid and foreigners smart. . . .

At the beginning of the modern era, Asians found themselves in a critical confrontation with their past. As the late Joseph Levenson pointed out, modern Chinese intellectual history can be summed up by two reciprocal processes: the progressive abandonment of tradition by iconoclasts, and the petrifaction of tradition by traditionalists.

Similar processes afflicted other countries of the region, leading many Asians in the 19th and early 20th century to neglect or even despise their past. Contrary to Woodside's assertion, it was the deep interest of Westerners—scholars and colonialists—in Asian history that rekindled that sense of relevance and pride which underlies the nationalistic use of the past by today's Asian revolutionaries. To take just South Asia as an example, there was William Jones's phenomenal rediscovery of the Aryan golden age; the role of Max Müller, Sir Edwin Arnold and the American Henry Olcott in Buddhism's awakening from decay and indifference; and Lord Curzon's work while Viceroy of India in preserving ancient Hindu monuments. As Nirad Chaudhuri somewhat excessively pointed out, "European oriental research rendered a service to Indian and Asiatic nationalism which no native could ever have given."

In recent decades a central force not only for greater international understanding of Asia's cultural tradition but for those cultures' understanding of their own past has been the work of American scholars, most notably, in Chinese studies, John Fairbank.

Nor has such concern been the preserve of Western intellectuals alone. The first briefing presented to Americans—military and civilian—about to be sent to Vietnam was usually a basic historic and cultural introduction to the country. Once there, many Americans became eager amateur historians, anthropologists and archaeologists of the country. The superficiality of these efforts was not owing to any want of concern or interest but to the lack of any substantial body of Western scholarship on which to draw. We are indebted to Woodside for his attempt to remedy this deficiency almost single-handedly.

Paradoxically, a major cause of the failure of the Republic of Vietnam and of our effort there was a reluctance to take the steps needed to wrench the South Vietnamese people out of the diffuse societal and psychic framework of their past and into the more demanding modern world. The Communists did not share this solicitude for traditional Vietnam; they did not hesitate to impose the discipline and centralized control which modern war and most states require. Thus, the war in Vietnam essentially was between a tradition-oriented society—our allies—and a modern society—the Communists.

The real issue is not *who* is most concerned with the past, but *what* attitude is adopted toward it. Asian Communists regard culture (history is just one aspect of it) as a devastatingly influential instrument for the achievement of present goals. As the anti-Confucius campaign in China shows, the Communists make the most careful selection of what aspects of their past are to be presented to their people—and what the interpretation of those past events shall be. This bears little if any resemblance to the Western ideal of historical accuracy or to the belief that the heritage of the past should be protected from contemporary factionalism in order that it may inspire or rebuke the present as the situation demands.

John Blenkiron

correction

An incorrect date is given at two places in Immanuel Wallerstein's "Luanda Is Madrid" [*The Nation*, January 3-10]. The errors appear on page 14, column 2, lines 32 and 38; the year in both cases should be 1964, not 1974.

EDITORIALS

Eyeball on Angola

Ronald Reagan is finally giving the American people a glimpse of what his national foreign policy might be like if he were President. Speaking to some 300 New Hampshire residents January 5, Reagan said the way to deal with the Russians was to "straighten up and eyeball them." As for Angola, he said, officials in Washington should be "saying to the Russians: Out. We'll let them [the Angolans, presumably] do the fighting, or you're going to have to deal with us."

Reagan would go no further, but it seems clear that at the least he would as President be matching the Ford secret funding of the anti-MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) forces. Unlike Ford, though, he might have stopped Gulf from sending a September oil royalty payment of $116 million to the MPLA-run Luanda government, rather than waiting to cut off such fees in late December after the CIA sent what by latest count was $30 million to the other side. And Reagan probably wouldn't pussyfoot about sending the mercenaries. The pattern of administration denials indicates that this country has, at minimum, been financing the training of soldiers to fight alongside the South Africans and the anti-MPLA forces. Like the Russians, Ford has called for an end to foreign intervention in Angola, though there now seem to be so many soldiers and advisers involved from so many countries that tracking them all down and making sure they leave would seem an impossible task.

On the surface, a coalition government might appear attractive as a settlement proposal, but as Tom Wicker wrote in *The New York Times* (January 6), more than forty countries have already recognized the MPLA faction as the government of Angola. And, recent Angolan history indicates, the three factions seem to find it impossible to share power with one another for any significant length of time.

A realistic solution may come out of the Organization of African Unity meeting that was scheduled to begin in Ethiopia January 10. Unlike the superpowers, the African nations have a direct stake in settlement of the Angolan conflict, if only to form a united front against South Africa. If it hopes to have any significant role in Africa for the foreseeable future, the government in Washington should immediately halt any mercenary activity in which it is engaged and pledge to support unconditionally whatever settlement the Angolans—or the OAU—might reach.

In Johannesburg, critics of their country's Angolan policies are, according to the *Los Angeles Times*, warning of a "South African Vietnam." The Asian label was applied to American involvement late last year and recently it has been said that Angola might prove to be a Vietnam for the Russians. The analogies have some truth. What is undeniable is that, in Angola as in Vietnam, peace can be made only by the people who live there.

Ostrich Feathers

President Ford's year-end reflections on American things in general, and on his own political prospects in

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particular, included a disavowal of what he described to a group of reporters as a "laundry list of liberal, expensive programs."

It is odd that in the mouths of conservative politicians "laundry lists" are always bad things—they no longer connote prudent housekeeping. Perhaps the Fords of the world should switch to "shopping list" to designate what they see as the people's impertinent demands on their government (or would that suggest that there might be something wrong about consumption?).

In any case, the laundry is not the best source of metaphors for Republicans these days. Too many Americans may still remember the vigorous public scrubbing of the Nixon administration's pile of dirty linen, and some will recall that "laundering" illegal political contributions in Mexican Laundromats was once regarded by highly placed Republicans as a positive, even a "pragmatic," virtue.

Mr. Ford did lay to rest one weary cliché from our disastrous past in Indochina. He said that the famous "domino theory" had been "disproven"—at least in Southeast Asia: dominoes are already being lined up again in the official rhetoric about Angola and southern Africa.

Altogether it was a dreary performance by Mr. Ford as the old year ended. The symbol-laden rhetoric of the current political dialogue was given a lackadaisical exercise. No light was shed on any of the issues of the day. And the President might have been speaking with his head firmly stuck in the sand when he said, defending his competence, "I have long felt that if you keep a high degree of composure and don't get rattled and have total confidence in yourself, that things work out pretty well." Can an ostrich whistle to keep its courage up while in its traditional posture?

Keeping the Concorde Out

Secretary of Transportation Coleman will decide by February 4 whether British and French Concordes will soon be polluting American skies. International Concorde flights begin January 21 between Paris and Rio de Janeiro and London and Bahrain. The British and French also want to land at JFK Airport in New York and at Dulles near Washington. Concordes can fly about twice as fast as ordinary jets. Riding them will cost 15 to 20 per cent more than riding first class on the existing jets. So only the rich will use them, though the social costs of Concorde flights will be more democratically shared.

For the Concorde pollutes the air more than other jets, it uses more fuel per passenger mile, it depletes the ozone in the atmosphere—and consequently could cause an increase in skin cancer—and it makes a hell of a lot of noise. New York Gov. Hugh Carey says he'll keep the Concordes out of his state even if Coleman approves them, and the British and French are understood to be ready to sue if that happens. The Environmental Protection Agency has told Coleman the Concordes don't belong at JFK and probably don't at Dulles. Concorde supporters, like defeated SST supporters in this country, belittle the environmental hazards of the plane. British and French officials have been threatening retaliation against American airlines and calling Concorde critics all but Luddites for opposing the

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technological progress they say the Concorde represents.

Yet, as the Sierra Club has pointed out, the Concorde is actually a step backward in the history of commercial aviation, since it uses more fuel and poses a greater range of environmental threats than do its predecessors. We suspect Coleman will decide to keep the Concordes out, both because the planes' critics have a good case and because American airlines have never been fond of competition and certainly do not want to be put to the awful expense of adding SSTs to their own fleets. In that case, commercial competition between airlines may do more to save us from the Concorde than the environmental considerations.

Restraining the FBI

Added to earlier disclosures, revelations now coming out of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activities offer convincing proof that the FBI was directly responsible for much of the political violence in this country over the last decade—and that its agents and their director, J. Edgar Hoover, took pride in their skewing of the political process.

The latest news is that in the late 1960s, FBI dirty tricksters systematically fired up internecine strife in San Diego between the Black Panthers and members of Ron Karenga's group known as "US." Six Black Panthers were killed as a result of that fighting, a committee staff member has reported. At that time bureau agents were telling Hoover: "Shootings, beatings and a high degree of unrest continues to prevail in the ghetto area of southeast San Diego. Although no specific counterintelligence action can be credited [*sic*] with contributing to this overall situation, it is felt that a substantial amount of the unrest is directly attributable to this program."

In his issue-length article, "Hoover's Legacy" (*The Nation*, June 1, 1974), Frank Donner notes that Hoover was "not only the nation's police chief; he filled a far more important post—he was its minister of internal security, an office of tremendous, if unacknowledged, power which he held continuously in six administrations." Donner meticulously documented the record of Hoover's reign of political terror: lives were destroyed, political movements were twisted by secret FBI operations. Watergate extended the range of targets sufficiently into the American mainstream to engender massive institutional and popular response, but the FBI operations, in total more massive and very probably more influential on the course of American politics, have until recently been largely ignored.

Since the revelations of Hoover's scandalous vendetta against Martin Luther King, Jr. have come out, and in the absence of a serious official investigation, the media have been busy with their own probes of the political assassinations since 1963. This is all to the good, of course, but when *The New York Times* (January 1) carries a headline—"A Study of Dr. King's Death Finds No Links to F.B.I."—over a report summarizing its own findings in the matter, it calls attention to the laggard behavior of the government in regard to a proper investigation of the FBI's role as a mischievous, not to say vicious, provocateur in the black community.

What is increasingly evident, and depressing, is a pattern of purely reactive behavior by the authorities in Washington. The government responds, slowly, only after the press and broadcasters (as in the case of CBS News' serious look back at all the recent assassinations and what might now be done about them) have shouted from the housetops. Attorney General Levi suggested to a meeting of the Association of American Law Schools last month that we have learned our lessons on the abuses of the intelligence and police apparatus. But what *are* the lessons the government is supposed to have learned? And what correctives have been built into the institutions themselves?

The answers to the first question are extremely vague and they will remain so until there is a full investigation using all the powers of the law to get at the whole truth. As to the second, there have been no serious changes in the institutions of law enforcement and, according to the Attorney General, none are in prospect. All we have after the exposure of the outrages of the FBI are bland promises not to do it again.

The Justice Department has recommended that the FBI, with approval of the Attorney General, still be allowed to take "preventative action" against individuals or groups it believes are preparing to engage in terrorist or other illegal activities that threaten the national security; the agency would be forbidden to commit or encourage crime. The Senate domestic intelligence subcommittee, headed by Walter Mondale (D., Minn.), has asked the bureau to come up with case histories showing that its surveillance, infiltration techniques and mail-opening procedures did indeed prevent planned violence. We suspect the examples will be few, if any.

For the purpose of the FBI's internal subversion programs historically has been not to insure against criminal activity but to punish political dissidence. The agency has of course done more to menace the democratic process than to protect it. Its counterintelligence and internal subversion operations should be severed from its crime-fighting tasks. Let the FBI investigate lawbreakers and bring them before the courts. That should be the limit of its reach.

Mischief in Mufti

President Ford is scheduled to announce within the next few days new rules and regulations for the intelligence "community," as it is commonly called. One can hope, without counting on it, that the CIA in particular will be brought under some kind of effective control. The reason for skepticism lies in the lack of much official indignation at the many revelations of the CIA's interference in the political processes of friendly nations, not to mention its shenanigans at home. Even Senator Church's committee seems to be backing off from the rigorous conclusions to which the evidence it dug up would seem to lead.

While we wait for the government to bring the rampaging intelligence agencies to heel, two recent developments in this field are worth noting. One is that CIA Director Colby is blaming the Washington publication *Counter-Spy* for identifying its agent in Athens, Richard Welch, and thus bringing about his assassination. Apparently Mr. Colby's intelligence sources do not include a German publication, *Who's Who in CIA*, which listed Mr. Welch as a CIA agent as long ago as 1969.

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The other development is the publication by the *Chicago Sun-Times* of the record of a meeting at the Council on Foreign Relations in 1968 at which the former head of the CIA's operations directorate—Richard M. Bissell, of Bay of Pigs notoriety—warned that the "cover" of CIA agents thronging American embassies abroad had been thoroughly blown and that better hiding places for these operatives had to be found. He suggested that corporations might provide safer nests. Mr. Bissell made that proposal before the multinationals had reached full bloom, and it is conceivable that these corporate monsters could find themselves caught between their national loyalty and their international greed if such an arrangement were to be pressed upon them.

Labor Views the Multinationals

The short-term financial gains and long-term economic losses for the United States that are built into the present proliferation of multinational corporations are convincingly portrayed in the latest issue of *Viewpoint*, the quarterly of the AFL-CIO's Industrial Union Department. The magazine's focus, quite naturally, is on the loss of jobs for American workers that results from the exporting of American capital and technology at the current rate. One study that it cites gives the figure of lost employment at home from this cause at slightly more than a million jobs for the period 1966 through 1973.

Beyond that there is the worrisome question of the effects far into the future of this flight of "runaway capital and sold-off technology." It is well known that American gains in productivity since 1960 (when the export of technology began in earnest) have been among the lowest of any industrial country in the world, and the operations of the multinationals seem to be a principal cause. The Republican administrations of the past seven years have encouraged this whole process. And Congress has bowed before the concentrated political clout of the multinationals, allowing them a whole panoply of tax reasons for continuing and even accelerating their shift to operations abroad.

As *Viewpoint* remarks, the English were busy exporting capital abroad for a quick killing in the early years of this century and they have been paying the high price for this short-sightedness for the last three decades. Will the American multinationals, with their drive for cheap foreign labor and tax breaks at home, be allowed to lead this once most productive system in the world down the same path?

Whose Affairs?

The State Department is about to get a "coordinator of consumer affairs" (at $37,800 a year) in the person of Joan R. Braden, a former personal assistant to Nelson Rockefeller and a social friend of Henry Kissinger.

It is hard to imagine the State Department as a "consumer." One thinks of it more as a "producer"—of mountains of staff papers and, occasionally, of an actual policy, though for decades now foreign policy has originated far more often in the "national security" apparatus of the White House and Pentagon than in its traditional home.

Understandably, Mrs. Braden's future colleagues in Foggy Bottom are puzzled about what it is that she will be doing. Perhaps they should accept this strange new post as just one of the more extravagant examples of a new kind of corrupted Naderism—consumerism in the interests of bureaucrats, not of consumers.

Touché

A year from now, the French Government has announced, the word "hot dog" will be verboten in advertisements, work contracts and other public documents under government control. According to Reuters, a member of the National Assembly, Pierre Bas, has denounced the American slang term for that bland sausage, along with "after-shave" and similar linguistic shortcuts, as causing "visible degradation" in the language of Molière and de Gaulle. After January 4, 1977, no foreign expression of any sort is to be employed when a French equivalent is available. (There will not, one presumes, be an equivalent for "O.K.")

In an era of rampant nationalism, this import ban is not of the first importance, and the courteous French have given us fair warning. However, it is late in the day for a nation that dons its "smokings" to dine on "biftecks" to get shirty about the modest frankfurter, and a show of proper indignation is perhaps incumbent on us. If they won't have our "after-shave," we can probably get along without their "coup d'état." Speaking of which, international contests to determine whose linguistic felicities shall prevail would be preferable to cod wars in sub-Arctic waters and post-colonial mischief in newborn states.

Death as Cover-up?

Portland, Ore.

In November the state of Washington voted 2 to 1 for the death penalty. California has long since balloted away its Supreme Court's voiding of capital punishment. And now, in the strawberry-sweet township of Lebanon, south of Portland, a minister has begun an initiative campaign for the signatures necessary to let the people of Oregon vote on the toughest death penalty provision in the country. Proponents of the measure see an easy signature petition drive, to be followed by a heavy vote and a brand new gas chamber for Oregon State Prison.

When the issue is joined, supporters of legal execution will be stumping the state. Hot after them will come those of us who are less death-prone and more underdog-minded, and who would stay as free from the cyanide as we now are of pull-tab cans and throwaway bottles. Advocates of capital punishment will conjure up Oregon's recent spate of brutal murders; opponents will cite the irrelevance of the death penalty as a deterrent. Inevitably, supporters will be labeled Neanderthals; opponents, bleeding hearts.

But thoughtful people here who are deeply committed to the reduction of crime in this state are beginning to feel that the real danger lies elsewhere. They believe that struggles over the death penalty in our present culture are exercises in futility which divert attention from a more

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dangerous drive that is mounting here, as elsewhere, to build expensive new hard-rock prisons, stamping into future generations the error of our ways.

The capital punishment furore is deemed futile because people may vote for executions, feeling that gut-deep satisfaction (mingled with a small guilt) at having adopted the death machine, and hot discussions may follow among campus intellectuals, but all this doesn't mean that anybody will be executed.

What it means is that, if the law is enacted, the gas chamber contractors will show lively interest. Some judge will face a heinous murderer and, if he is some impoverished idiot unconnected with Watergate, will sentence him to choke on cyanide! Then we will watch an already cluttered court system hamstrung even more by ambitious lawyers layering on appeals. We'll see years of delays; our tax bills will reflect them.

Murder indictments will pile up jury trials, and over those juries will hang, like Banquo's ghost, the ultimate decision for life or death, with even more legal nicety and court punctilio than now. In the unlikely event of an execution in the cultural climate of this decade, after years of appeals, the prison warden at the site of the execution will probably have to keeplock his population to avoid a multimillion-dollar prison riot.

Is it something new? H.L. Mencken wrote in *Liberty*, the highest circulation magazine of its time, on July 28, 1934:

> In the year 1932 there were 11,000 homicides in the U.S. . . . we executed only 130 murderers, a proceeding as silly as trying to hold back Niagara with a tennis racket. What if we hanged 1,000, or 2,000, or 3,000? Let our laws be modified so that a professional brigand will be put to death as soon as his adoption of the trade can be proved, whether he actually killed or not.

Mencken viewed the execution of a mere 130 miscreants with mournful regret. What is the likelihood of executing 130, or even thirteen, today? Capital punishment struggles come and go as a reflection of the heinousness of the crime, and the depth of economic stringency. Oregon's taboo on legal death is only eleven years old. Washington's laws have alternated in similar fashion, as have those in many other states.

The current danger is that citizens will become so involved and overawed by the death issue that they will not notice that it can become a cover-up for a much more important issue—that of squandering millions of dollars of tax money to build new prisons. Advocates of these structures will usually oppose the death penalty and cynical observers will comment that execution eliminates the customer.

Here in Oregon, a drive is mounting to build more prisons. The ambitious office seeker can be sure of a permanent monument, a steel misery house, and the homage of grateful contractors. Such prisons will stand there for eighty years, creating penological vacuums which the public, and therefore the judges, will feel must be kept filled.

It was former Gov. Tom McCall's proud boast that not one cent of his biennial budgets was expended for the construction of a single prison cell. But the Federal Bureau of Prisons has acquired $25.94 million more for new prison construction. There's money out there.

This problem requires more analysis, but the point for Oregon is that we cannot let the capital punishment struggle divert us from scotching the drive to multiply prisons: prisons which memorialize a bankrupt criminal justice system.

Thomas E. Gaddis

THE FREDA KIRCHWEY I KNEW

Carey McWilliams

One of her instructors at Barnard said of Freda Kirchwey that in her undergraduate days she was the prettiest, most intelligent, and most radical girl in her class. It is easy for those who knew her only in later life to accept this statement. The Freda I knew—we first met in the middle 1930s—was this same girl grown older: attractive, intelligent, and still a radical. She was also charming, fun-loving, light-hearted and vivacious. But such notations are really of marginal relevance. She was a beautiful and radiant person and that is what mattered most. A delightful companion at all times, in all imaginable settings, she was also an incomparably fine working colleague and a devoted and loving friend. Once she had induced me to move to New York to join *The Nation*, she adopted my wife, Iris, son Jerry, and myself, as part of her circle of friends and with many kindnesses eased what was for us a difficult adjustment.

Despite frequent differences, usually over tactics, I cannot remember that Freda and I ever had a serious quarrel or sharp disagreement. That I can make such a statement is truly remarkable in view of the stormy experiences we shared during the troublesome cold-war years which presented many problems for *The Nation*. From first to last, we never ceased to be the best of friends. The last time I saw her we had a marvelous time at lunch, with much merriment and laughter, recapturing half-forgotten incidents and reliving assorted trials and tribulations. I had been told that her memory was failing but that was not my impression; she was as gay and lively as ever and remembered many incidents I had forgotten.

During the years I knew her at *The Nation* she was more its publisher than its editor. She had by then become a public personage of national prominence, widely known and respected. She knew everyone, or so it seemed. She never had the least difficulty in "getting through" to those with whom she wished to speak. As publisher of *The Nation* she was an active participant in public affairs, and these often claimed more time than she devoted to editing the magazine. She liked to move in the corridors of power where decisions are made and was not at all averse to helping make them. In today's jargon she was a political activist. The atmosphere at the U.N., where she was widely

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known and admired, was most congenial to her. She had sound political instincts and enjoyed public functions. In her public life she was an adroit negotiator and persuasive advocate, consistently amiable but, as Reinhold Niebuhr once pointed out, "shrewd and discerning, hard-boiled and not easily taken in."

But if she came to enjoy her public role, she continued to love the hustle and confusion of weekly journalism. She had grown up, so to speak, at *The Nation*, having joined the staff in 1919 as a cub reporter. There were few tasks associated with getting out the magazine that she had not performed. She liked to edit copy and was very good at it. She had a lively continuing interest in the "back-of-the-book" section. As an editor she was more interested in foreign affairs and national politics than in local or state politics, and a fairly wide range of domestic concerns lay outside her ken. She knew a great deal more about Israel than about Indiana and was doubtless more interested in Argentina than in Arizona. Under her leadership *The Nation* and The Nation Associates (brilliantly directed by Lillie Shultz) played a key role in alerting national opinion to the dangers of European fascism, gave all-out support to the war effort, and did a superb job of focusing attention on critical postwar issues and the need to win the peace. She and her associates were responsible in no small measure for keeping Franco's Spain out of the U.N. for quite some years and for winning United States support and U.N. approval for the partition of Palestine, which brought the new state of Israel into existence. And there were similar efforts, some successful, some not, but all worth while. Her campaign against the Peron regime matched in spirit Villard's campaign against the Black and Tan terror in Ireland and his attempts to get the Marines out of Haiti. A new generation of feminists have half-forgotten Freda's eloquent support of women's rights from the time she was a student at Barnard through the years of her editorship.

At the top of the list of Freda's fine personal qualities, I would place her courage, her unflappability, her indomitable spirit. Throughout the searing experiences we shared, she remained self-confident, high-spirited, and never lost her poise or sense of humor. That she was addicted to biting her fingernails was about the only outward manifestation of tension I ever observed. There were times, in the cold-war years, when *The Nation* was caught up in what seemed to be a perpetual crisis; nearly every weekend involved interminable emergency conferences, forays into the suburbs in quest of patrons, and darting visits to one city or another to seek financial support. These exertions were tiring and often discouraging, but Freda never registered dismay or disappointment. I was keenly aware, in that period, of the depth of her concern for friends and associates who were being harassed by inquisitorial committees and grand juries, or who had been hounded out of their jobs and professions. She never backed away from any of these tests of courage and integrity and did what she thought she had to do without complaint and with real grace. She was a person of intense loyalties. Her support of J. Alvarez del Vayo and the cause he represented in exile was steadfast and gallant; it became in effect her cause. What most angered her about the unfair and venomous attacks on him was the fact that the snipers knew that as a "stateless" person he was in constant danger of arrest and deportation. She could be quite stubborn, often at considerable risk and disadvantage, in defense of persons she had come to respect and admire and she did not easily forget or forgive those who had attacked them.

I have never known a less self-righteous person than Freda or one who made less of her position and achievements. She was quite without pretense. A point to be noted is that she always knew exactly who she was. Although there was a touch of *noblesse oblige* in her attitudes—she had always moved in somewhat rarefied social and intellectual circles: her father had been Dean of the Columbia Law School and a well-known figure in the Progressive (Bull Moose) movement—she was also, as Joseph Wood Krutch once said, "a natural-born Bohemian" whose sympathies for underdogs and outcasts were perfectly genuine.

She was also a notably generous and supportive person. Her relations with the staff were open, frank, friendly and informal. If she had enemies—and she did—she had acquired them largely because of her loyal support of persons and causes and not because of anything she had said or done to advance her own interests or those of the magazine. She upheld to a fault *The Nation*'s tradition of allowing literary editors to enjoy virtually complete autonomy, even when they used it, as happened on occasion, in an attempt to embarrass her. She was never petty or vindictive, and I never knew her to indulge in scapegoating at any time, under any circumstance, although the provocation was often severe.

An excellent editorial writer, Freda immensely enjoyed the give-and-take of editorial conferences for which she was usually late. She would then put off writing her particular editorial until the last moment and would write and rewrite behind closed doors until the copy editors were of a mind to break them down and seize whatever she had

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written. It is quite possible that she was meant to be a public personage rather than an editor. After she had left *The Nation* she signed a contract to write her memoirs but never finished more than an initial chapter. Somehow she could not get on with the book, perhaps from an innate reluctance to talk about herself. Whatever the reason, it is a pity she never wrote it for she had a remarkable story to tell. Fortunately, several young scholars are currently much interested in her career and one of them may yet give us the book that needs to be written.

DISCONTENTED, MISTRUSTFUL, FRAGMENTED

THE REAL DANGER IN ALIENATION

JAMES D. WRIGHT

Recent indications of general alienation, discontent and political distrust have occasioned much alarm about the "future of American democracy." As to the indicators themselves, there can be little serious disagreement. However measured, political alienation is clearly on the rise. According to the Survey Research Center (University of Michigan), for example, the proportion of the American population who feel that the government in Washington can "be trusted to do what is right only some of the time" increased from about 23 per cent in 1958 to nearly 45 per cent in 1972. To a similar question, asking whether the government is "run by a few big interests looking out for themselves," the proportion saying "yes" increased from 26 to 53 per cent in the brief period from 1964 to 1972. Seven additional indicators of political disaffection show the same pattern through the period in question. Furthermore, that period ends just before Watergate, and evidence since then from the National Opinion Research Center indicates that the trend has hardly abated. One question included in its 1973 and 1974 general social surveys asked respondents how much confidence they had in the people running the "executive branch of the government." The proportion checking "hardly any" grew from 19 to 43 per cent in the one year, and the proportion expressing a "great deal" of confidence dwindled from 30 to 14 per cent. At present, in other words, roughly nine citizens out of ten have something less than complete confidence in the American political leadership. However one chooses to measure this notion of "trust in government," the fact is that it has been in more or less steady decline since about 1964.

These signs of disillusion are indeed alarming, but what they imply about the American political future is anything but clear and may in fact be quite the reverse of the projection frequently offered. Perhaps the most common line of speculation, one having a counterpart in academic theories about "the politics of mass society," links the concept of political alienation to a series of semi-pathological traits. The alienated, it is said, are also negativistic, intolerant, politically simple-minded, authoritarian, suspicious, prone to scapegoating, dogmatic and inflexible. Apathetic and withdrawn in normal times, they are readily mobilized in times of crisis, once their alienation reaches an intolerable level and a clever demagogue appears on the scene. In this forecast, the politically discontented are a ready constituency for a mass political movement that would directly challenge the legitimacy of the prevailing system. This movement would, of course, only reflect the ignoble predispositions of its supporters. Its initial thrust would be to "throw the rascals out," to purge the system of incumbent politicians who are seen as the proximate cause of contemporary distress. Once swept to power by a rampaging mass will, the movement would then attack the basic sources of discontent: the welfare-state apparatus would be dismantled and the welfare class abolished; the colleges and universities would be purified, the races separated, and the "old values" returned to their former place of prominence. The phraseology of these predictions is meant to evoke Fascist or proto-fascistic politics. Thus, Herbert Levine (in *The Nation*, August 17, 1974) explicitly links declining confidence in politicians with a presumed "culture of fascism." "Fascism," we are told, "is an expression of political anger, rooted in a perception of economic distress, and directed at irrelevant targets." As for the prospects of such a development in the United States, "it is clear that the Fascist potential has increased greatly since 1970." In a similar vein, Lewis Killian (*The Impossible Revolution—Phase Two*) has flatly predicted a "white national socialist (Nazi) America" by no later than 1980.

But how likely is it that these drifts in opinion will lead to some proto-fascistic development? How secure are liberal political traditions in the United States? My belief is that the course of events outlined above misrepresents the nature of the alienation trends, ignores an immense mass of contradictory evidence and therefore fails to comprehend the true "threat" of the rising discontent.

Note first that the phrase, "the politically alienated," has seriously misleading connotations. It suggests, first of all, something more than a mere statistical aggregate by implying a common political outlook or ideology, some mutual awareness of shared experiences and shared interests—in short, it assumes at least a potential basis for political mobilization. It is not so: all the available evidence strongly suggests that "the alienated" do not comprise an especially cohesive social or political group.

The politically discontented are widely dispersed in the social class structure. There are, to be sure, relatively more disenchanted and disaffected citizens in the lower social strata, but the correlation is considerably less than perfect.

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Data from the 1970 SRC survey on "trust in government" make the point. Among the professional, technical and managerial persons reached in that survey, approximately 40 per cent were scored as "low" in political trust. Among the skilled and semi-skilled blue-collar workers (the so-called "hard-hats"), the proportion was only fractionally higher, about 44 per cent; among the unskilled blue-collar workers, about 66 per cent. The evidence from educational attainment is approximately the same: among those with less than an eighth-grade education, about 49 per cent were scored low in political trust; for college graduates the figure was 40 per cent. This suggests that a movement based on "alienation" would have to draw more or less equally from the upper, middle, working and lower classes. Needless to say, the dispersion would raise serious problems for anyone attempting to mobilize the entire discontented group.

Much the same could be said for many other politically relevant lines of cleavage in the society—for example, region, race, religion and age. Using the same factor of "low trust," one finds the following: among nonwhites, about 61 per cent are highly distrustful; among whites in the South, the figure is about 54 per cent. The "movement" of politically alienated citizens, then, would have to draw about equally from blacks and Southern whites. There is no statistically significant difference between Protestants and Catholics in the matter of political discontent, so the "movement" would also have to appeal to both of these groups in roughly equal proportions. The difference in the level of political trust between the youngest (18 to 24) and the oldest (65-plus) groups in the sample was about 15 percentage points, the older group being the *less* trusting. Is there, then, a candidate or potential leader who could appeal strongly to blacks and Southern whites, to Protestants and Catholics, to the young and the old, to the upper-middle and the lower working classes? And even if such an unlikely person were found, someone who truly was "all things to all people," what conceivable threat could he or she pose to democratic institutions?

Given their social fragmentation, it should come as no surprise that the discontented are also politically diverse. The group is found in equal strength in the two major parties. In the 1970 data being discussed, 45 per cent of Democrats and 43 per cent of Republicans (outside the South) were scored low in political trust. A clever demagogue, bent on exploiting alienation and able to secure a major party nomination (the most obvious possibility being Wallace in 1976), would therefore immediately find that about half the intended constituency was located in the other party. It is, of course, possible that all those "other-party" alienates could be persuaded to defect, but given the tenacity of party identification in this country, the possibility seems remote.

A related problem is that, contrary to a widespread assumption, the alienated share no common political ideology. The 1968 SRC survey contains a long series of questions on political attitude that relate to such matters as the welfare state, race, and so on. These items were combined to produce a measure of "liberal-conservative ideology." Political distrust did relate to this measure of ideology, but, as before, the coincidence was not pronounced. About 48 per cent of those low in political trust scored at the conservative end of the scale, in contrast to 31 per cent of those high in trust. It is true, then, that the distrustful are somewhat more conservative than the rest of the society. At the same time, these data also show that about 52 per cent of the distrustful did not land on the conservative side of the scale, which means that the group is split nearly fifty-fifty on this broad ideological dimension. Other components of political ideology (for example, isolationism, anti-communism) showed essentially the same pattern.

Sharing no common party or common political outlook, the alienated are also not organized in any politically real sense. Almost by definition, the group is composed primarily of the unorganized and the unrepresented. There is, for example, no League of Alienated Women Voters to get out the vote on election day, no National Association for the Advancement of Alienated People to win a political hearing, no Vietnam Veterans Against Alienation to command the media's attention. The only visible exception is the Boston-based organization known as ROAR (Restore Our Alienated Rights), which has been active in the anti-bussing movement. It would be folly, of course, to infer anything about the politically disenchanted in the society from the existence or name of this organization.

One final point to be made along these lines is that the alienation which does exist in the society derives from many disparate sources. There is considerable evidence that a large portion of adult political discontent arises very early in life, as part of the normal process of political socialization in the lower and working classes. For example, David Easton and Jack Dennis have shown (in the *American Political Science Review*, March 1967) that the difference in political alienation between the working and middle classes can be observed among children as early as the third grade. In short, many of the political alienates encountered in surveys of the adult population have apparently borne their estrangement since early youth. It is not reasonable to suppose that this group has been prowling around from the age of 8 in search of some movement that would lessen its discontent. Rather, it can be expected that they will have long since made such attitudinal or behavioral adjustments as the situation requires—for example, will have decided that things could hardly be otherwise, that such is the natural or normal state of affairs, that, bad as it is, the system is probably no worse than any realistic alternative. It is not likely that this group will give much credence to some overnight savior who promises to remove all the sources of their discontent. "This," they would say, "we have heard many times before."

Not all of the current discontent, of course, can be ascribed to childhood sources. Much contemporary alienation has been occasioned by specific policy failures on the part of the political leadership—the bumbling of American policy in Vietnam, mismanagement of the economy and, most recently, the chicaneries of Watergate. But here, too, the resulting discontent has surely not been "of a piece." Some sectors of the society became frustrated and disillusioned because the government refused to withdraw American troops immediately from Vietnam; other sectors, because the government was willing to settle for something less than total victory there. Similarly, various groups

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differed markedly in their reactions to and interpretations of Watergate: some became more disenchanted because Nixon was not forced from office sooner; others, because he was forced from office at all. Once again, the prospects for a future alliance between these groups do not seem bright.

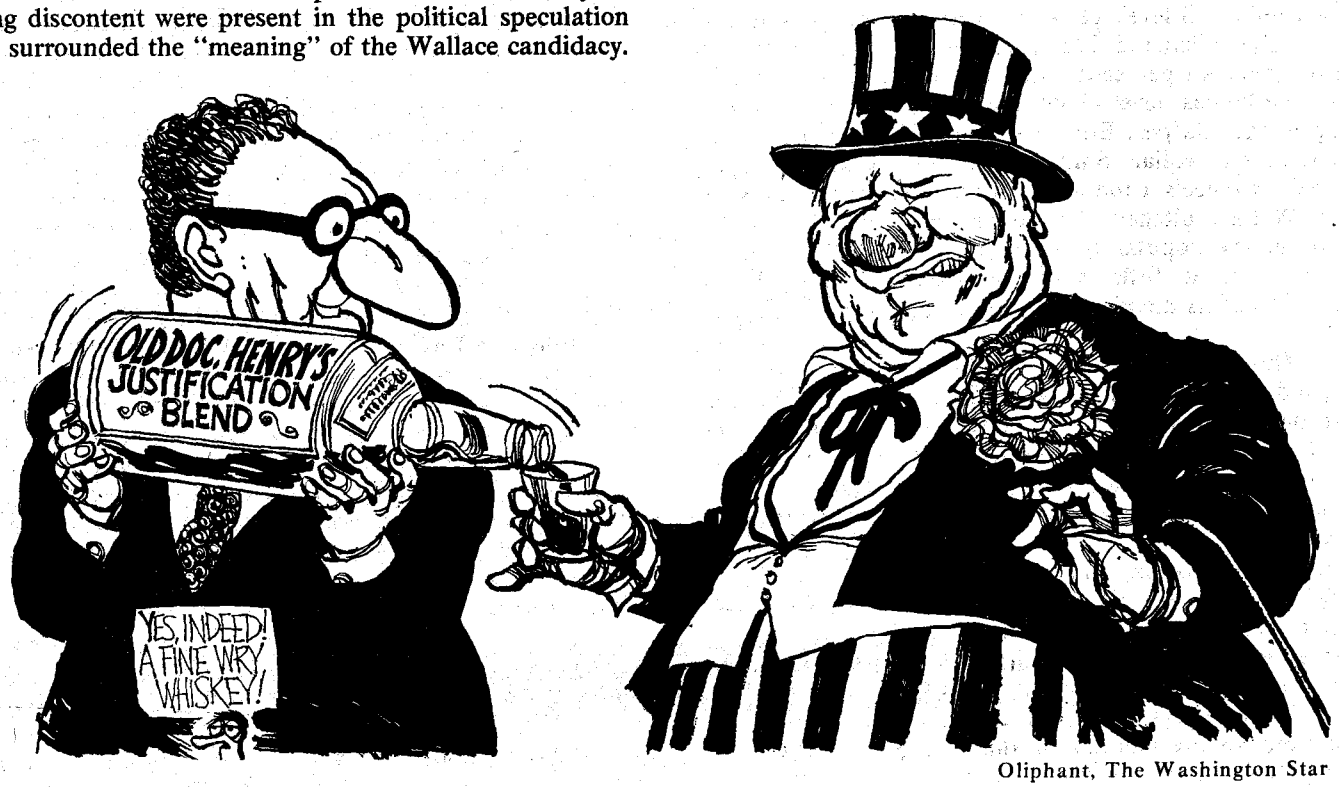
What we have witnessed in the last few years, then, is not the progressive disenchantment of a few malcontents residing at the social periphery, not even a trend confined to this or that specific social or political group. On the contrary, rising disaffection has touched every group in the society more or less equally. Any political movement that would capitalize on these trends, to reiterate a point already made, would be obliged to appeal simultaneously to an exceedingly broad spectrum of the population—to unskilled workers and college graduates, to the "tempestuous" young and the "recalcitrant" old, to Democrats and Republicans, Protestants and Catholics, to Southerners and non-Southerners, and so on. It cannot be emphasized too strongly how grossly implausible such a movement would seem to be. Any demagogue who relies on increasing discontent to sweep him into office is going to be severely disappointed.

Among those who might be "severely disappointed" is George Wallace, who ran for the Presidency in 1968. It is customary in conventional accounts to dwell on Wallace's successes; his popular vote, after all, marked him as the "most successful" third-party candidate since Theodore Roosevelt. What that overlooks is that nearly 90 per cent of the population *rejected* the Wallace appeal. Given that he was on the ballot in all fifty states, the 1968 Wallace vote signals the vigor, not the decay, of political intelligence in America.

Most of the themes now rampant in the commentary on rising discontent were present in the political speculation that surrounded the "meaning" of the Wallace candidacy. He was appealing directly to the sense of estrangement and despair, the growing dissatisfaction with the Tweedledum and Tweedledee offerings of the major parties, the increasing hostility to "politics as usual." His campaign, moreover, was laced with all the racist and Populist appeals that should have increased his attraction to the alienated and disaffected sectors. The "temper of the times" might also have favored his candidacy. There had been one major political assassination in the year; there had been increasingly bitter and divisive debate over American policy in Vietnam; there had been race riots in a number of major U.S. cities in the preceding summer of 1967; there had been turmoil on the campuses, rising crime, declining absolute standards of living. David English, political commentator for the London *Daily Express*, summarized in *Divided They Stand* the American scene of 1968: "Americans were almost without exception gripped by frustration, a frustration so powerful that many people feared that the nation was heading for a nervous breakdown." The times, in short, were ripe for a demagogic political movement such as Wallace represented. Yet roughly nine citizens in ten rejected his appeal.

What role, exactly, did political alienation play in the Wallace experience? What lessons can thereby be learned about the potential role of rising discontent in the immediate political future? Data from the 1968 SRC Presidential election study provide some revealing answers to these questions.

First, there was a correlation between alienation and Wallace voting in 1968; that is, the more alienated respondents were somewhat more likely to have voted for Wallace than were nonalienated respondents. Among those lowest in political trust, about 24 per cent chose Wallace as their candidate; among those highest in trust, the figure



Oliphant, The Washington Star

"Ah, Yes! A Man Has to Believe in Something, and I Believe I'll Have Another Drink!"

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was about 3 per cent. There are, as always, two ways to read that kind of statistical evidence. First, candidates such as Wallace do have some residual appeal to the politically discontented; but second, large majorities of even the most alienated reject such candidates in favor of more moderate alternatives. Given the facts noted earlier, one would hardly expect it to be otherwise. Even if all voters in the society had been extremely distrustful of government, it is unlikely that Wallace would have received as much as a quarter of the total popular vote. And given the extreme social and political fragmentation of the group, there is no reason to expect that it will be commonly galvanized by any other such candidate, in either the immediate or distant future. In other words, the slight preferential tendency revealed by the evidence is not sufficient to offset the pronounced party and ideological differences which exist *within* the alienated group.

In most of the commentary on the Wallace vote, the idea of alienation is linked to some presumed class-specific and region-specific appeals. The politically discontented blue-collar workers, especially those of the South, often figure as the main villains of the piece. Looking first at blue-collar workers outside the South, the data reveal that approximately 12 per cent of the *least* trusting claimed to have voted for Wallace; the comparable figure for highly alienated white-collar workers, by the way, was 11 per cent—not much difference. Among the less alienated respondents of both classes, of course, Wallace voting was somewhat lower. The major lesson to be learned from these data is that about nine-tenths of the most alienated blue-collar workers outside the South did *not* vote for Wallace. The threat of this group to established democratic institutions has apparently been exaggerated.

In the South, slightly different patterns obtain, although even here the conclusions to be drawn are about the same. There were, first, more votes for Wallace from all social classes and at all levels of political discontent. Among the most highly alienated blue-collar workers in the white South, about 43 per cent voted for Wallace, and that is about the highest level of Wallace support shown for any group in the analysis. But once again, even among highly alienated blue-collar Southern whites, well over half rejected Wallace's candidacy. Given the strong appeals which Wallace pitched at precisely this group, given the alarms in the popular press about its vengeful political intentions, it is little short of amazing that almost three-fifths of its members remained unpersuaded.

The slight tendency revealed in these data for alienated citizens to prefer a candidate such as Wallace must be weighted by a very important factor not yet considered here—the pronounced tendency of the politically discontented to participate less in politics. Several dozen academic studies of the "correlates of political alienation" confirm the conclusion that, however one defines political participation, those who are disenchanted with politics are far less likely to participate. In the 1968 election, only about half of the most alienated citizens bothered to vote, compared with nearly 85 per cent of the least alienated. (In both cases, the figures are only for those who were registered and otherwise eligible to vote.) Data from all Presidential elections since 1956 show the same pattern, and it is what one would expect. In most cases, a precondition for political participation is some confidence that one's actions might possibly make a difference, and that belief the discontented obviously lack. This means that the political preferences of disaffected groups will have far less effect than their proportionate numbers in the population would suggest, and that any "backward" impulses which they might harbor will be offset by their proclivity not to act on them. About half of any "meanness" which they exhibit never figures in the political equation. That, in any case, was undeniably true for the Wallace experience in 1968, and there is no reason to think it will be any less true under future circumstances.

The political withdrawal common among alienated citizens has received relatively little attention in popular alarmist accounts, except as an indication of their pathological response to things political. This neglect is doubly unfortunate: first, because in approximately two decades of scholarly research on political alienation and discontent, the only consistent and unambiguous finding has been that such people do not participate; and, second, because it is in this tendency that the true significance of the recent alienation trend lies.

Given what we think we know about the character and correlates of political alienation, the only reasonable prediction about short- or long-term consequences of the recent trends is that the level of political apathy will continue to rise in the society. Political participation, never remarkably high in American politics, will, I expect, sink to all-time lows through the coming decade, especially if neither major party can come up with a Presidential candidate able to rekindle popular confidence. From certain points of view, some of them quite prominent among academic theories of American democracy, decreased participation might seem a good thing; according to these theories, apathy is a sign of basic contentment with the *status quo*. My view, however, is that increased apathy would only signal a further de-democratization of a political system that is already excessively responsive to the interests of those at the top. Verba and Nie (*Participation in America*) have put the point well: the current structure of political participation in the United States, they say, only "helps those who are already better off." Any increase in mass apathy occasioned by alienation trends would strengthen that conclusion. The probable net effect of increasing discontent, then, is to intensify the existing unequal distribution of scarce social, political and economic resources in the society, to heighten still further the disparities between the higher and lower social strata, to increase that portion of democratic opinion which drops out of the basic political process. In all probability, we will *not* experience some heightened sense of mass vigilance, but on the contrary, an increased nonconcern with the comings and goings of political elites. Increased apathy, in short, will remove yet another constraint on the behavior of the political leadership; it will make another Vietnam, another Watergate, not less likely but more. The true threat of rising discontent, therefore, is not to the stability of the system but to its responsiveness and, ultimately, its justice. It is not the rise of a Wallace that we need to fear and forestall; it is another agglomeration of Nixons, Haldemans, Mitchells and related types who will be free to violate and mismanage the "public trust" because no one has retained the strength to challenge or object. Thus the situ-

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ation is much akin to that noted by C. Wright Mills, discussing what he saw to be a predominant tendency among the modern democratic masses: "They lose their will for rationally considered decision and action because they do not possess the instruments for such decision and action; they lose their sense of political belonging because they do not belong; they lose their political will because they see no way to realize it." □

FOR THE WORKERS, BY THE WORKERS

PRESS EXPERIMENT IN PERU

DAVID DUNAWAY and MARGIT BIRGE

In Peru, the major international daily has been turned over to a national peasants' organization. In Portugal, striking printers took control of their shop to make the paper "serve the needs of the working class." In Paris, the editorial staff of *Le Monde* has been granted financial control over the paper. All of these changes exemplify a new trend in newspaper publication: the expropriation of papers from their traditional owners and a rash of experiments with their management.

At issue is whether these papers are now to serve the interests of their staffs, of a broadly defined working class, or of a particular sector of society. And once that is determined, to which one of these are the papers accountable? Will freedom of the press be any freer when it is taken out of the hands of its traditional powers? These questions are critical to examining the Peruvian "socialization" of the press.

In Peru the government has defined newspapers as organs with an obligation to further the policies of social change which that government pursues. Through this definition the administration hopes to give previously excluded groups access to mass communication. The transformation began on July 27, 1974, when the seven largest papers were expropriated and distributed among seven organized sectors of society.

To understand what has been taking place one needs some background in recent Peruvian history. In some ways the military junta ruling there is entirely unlike what one associates with the term. It encourages nationalization of all basic industries and redistribution of large farms to the impoverished peasants. But until last year the newspapers promoted *laissez-faire* economics and harassed the military. It was a strange situation: a leftist "not capitalist, not Communist" government of generals, and an ultraconservative press in opposition.

Peru, which has within its boundaries both Andean peaks and Amazon forests, suffers from poor transportation and an even poorer communications network; it is often subjected to paralyzing earthquakes and floods. As in most South American countries, the landowning aristocracy has traditionally restrained economic development, while foreign capital has reaped most of the profits from the nation's resources.

The Peruvian military first became active in the political process of the country during the late 1960s, when they were sent into the mountains to eliminate heavy guerrilla activity. They date their conversion to a socialist ideology from that experience. Some critics, however, assert that the generals decided to act at that time to prevent what seemed to be impending civil war.

In October 1968, the army under Gen. Juan Alvarado Velasco staged a coup and proclaimed the start of a "Christian, humanist and socialist" revolution. They were committed to autonomous national development, an end to foreign economic control, and the building of "a harmonious society" without class antagonisms.

When the military government came to power, replacing the conservative and ineffectual President Belaunde, the Western press piously intoned against another Latin American military regime. But when, a week later, the junta nationalized the Canadian International Petroleum Corporation—having discovered that it was owned 98 per cent by Standard Oil of New Jersey—the critics began to sing another tune. The Peruvian generals have continued to differentiate themselves from their counterparts in the countries that surround them: Bolivia, Brazil and Chile. They have nationalized Peru's extensive national resources (oil, silver, copper and zinc) while aggressively promoting agrarian reform by breaking up the vast latifundia, or manor estates of the wealthy.

With some exceptions, the results have been impressive. In 1968, according to a study by the Peruvian economist Richard Webb, 65 per cent of the country's oil and 90 per cent of its mineral production was in the hands of foreign capital. The government has nationalized most of this: in 1974, 40 per cent of the economy was state-controlled. One-half of the country's arable land has been subdivided among the 6 million peasants, with projections for 15 per cent more by 1980.

Ever since the military took power, they have been attacked from both the Right and the Left. The Right forces, predominantly in the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance, have protested restrictions on foreign capital and plans for ownership and industrial control by workers. The far Left has denied the revolutionary character of the regime, pointing to the top-down, authoritarian process of the government and to its neglect of grass-roots initiative by the peasants and the working class. A new President, Gen. Francisco Morales Bermudez, replaced Velasco in a bloodless coup at the end of last August. In the past few months, he has tolerated a broader range of political activity, which could lead to increasing pressure from either the Right or the Left.

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The socialization of the press, a move which surprised many Western observers, had actually been provided for three years earlier in the chief social document of Peru's planned economy, the "Plan Inca." Social communication was to be nationalized, like any other commercial enterprise. The government decided to act when it did largely because of the increasing virulence of the attacks by major fishing, banking and mining interests which retained control of the newspapers after their other possessions had been taken from them. These same groups are the famous "forty families" that have ruled Peru since the early 19th century. The members of one of them, the Miro-Quesadas, were called the patriarchs of Peru's press. On the evening when rifle-bearing police entered the inner offices of the ultraconservative *El Comercio*, a new era was born.

The expropriation of the press brought a wide variety of international reactions, not all accurate. In the United States, *The Christian Science Monitor* called it "another major blow at press freedom," lumping it in a review with completely unparallel events in Brazil and Uruguay. The *Los Angeles Times* decried an action "in common with right-wing totalitarianism in the hemisphere." *The Washington Post* suggested that the move was "effectively shutting off any widespread criticism." Even the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* thundered editorially: "President Velasco is frightened by constructive criticism . . . [it] requires a different brand of courage from that needed to come with tanks and guns in the middle of the night, as he did, and throw out an elected President."

The Inter-American Press Association, since exposed as a conduit for covert CIA operations in neighboring Chile, also denounced the move. The association, which had members of the Miro-Quesadas clan on its board of directors, called it "contrary to the business of social communications." In contrast, the working journalists' union of Venezuela declared at its October 1974 convention, "The Peruvian experiment holds the future of a press dedicated to the masses." And Zurich's *Neue Zeitung* called the reform "a positive step."

Regardless of opinion, it was a necessary step in Peru's nationalist-socialist revolution. "It was a ridiculous situation," recalls Raul Vargas, a prominent Lima editor. "Our papers were *very* conservative. The editorial page of *La Prensa* was straight out of Adam Smith." When the press was expropriated, the military government emphasized that the newspapers would not be taken over by the state. According to the new statute of the press, drafted by Presidential press secretary Agosto Zimmerman, and now widely sold in the streets, the country's dailies with more than 20,000 circulation were to be distributed among organized sectors of the population. As a result, representative organizations of peasants, professionals and factory workers all have their own papers, administered through directing committees. These eleven-member committees include representatives from the respective sector and three representatives of the printers, typesetters and journalists. The production staff is also to participate in management and profit sharing.

Initially, the government appointed temporary directors and supervising staff to serve for one year and to implement the transition to full control by the sectors themselves. When this period ended last July, new directing committees were elected, but the government announced that it would continue to appoint the papers' directors.

The organizations representing the various sectors of the population have been chosen by the military leaders; up to now, they have been loyal to the government. Many of these organizations, such as the National Agrarian Federation which controls *El Comercio* in the name of the peasants, have been set up relatively recently, with the help of the government's political education organ, SINAMOS. Other groups, such as the Peasant Confederation of Peru (CCP), which have significant power in some rural areas, have not been allowed to participate.

In the first year, under Velasco, the government became increasingly intolerant and even repressive toward criticism from both the Right and the Left. The revolutionary process was strictly defined by the generals, and those working for change outside that definition were labeled "counterrevolutionary." Several journalists were deported in early 1975, and members of a group that wanted to form a "Committee in Defense of the Revolution" were fired from their jobs at Lima's daily, *Expreso*.

President Morales has allowed previously exiled journalists to return, and independent papers suppressed by the previous government have reopened. It remains to be seen whether the press can serve both as a means of educating the masses and an outlet for criticism, while trying not to "disrupt" the process of change being directed by the government. In Portugal, the recent closings and censorship of the press by a leftist government have raised the doubts of many observers in Peru.

Despite optimism, change is slow. Some of the papers have still not been turned over to their respective sectors and continue to be directed by government-appointed committees. At *La Prensa*, the "industrial communities" which were to have received ownership and control of the paper in 1975 are still in the first stage of holding elections for their representatives. This reflects a problem present in all sectors: a lack of unity and strong organization among the members. According to Hector Cornejo Chavez, present director of *El Comercio*, only one-fourth of the peasants—thought to be the most highly organized sector—belong to the government-sponsored National Agrarian Federation, though another quarter belong to sister groups.

Even if control is successfully passed to the previously disfranchised peasants, a major stumbling block remains. Journalistic success and political responsibility seem to clash in the reformed papers. *El Comercio* continues to use the conservative format it adopted in 1839—years before *The New York Times* began to publish—making it virtually unreadable for the peasants it is supposed to serve. The government expects the paper to maintain its position as the most important daily, serve the peasants' economic interests, and continue to appeal to urban readers. No subsidies are intended for the papers, which must remain successful businesses while serving a social cause.

Still, the papers have changed:

—*La Prensa* features an expanded letters section and an editorial page for readers' opinions, even those that display "unorthodox" grammar.

—*El Comercio* publishes a special supplement for

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peasants.

—*La Cronica*, the government newspaper, has adopted a new layout which has increased circulation, thus demonstrating the flexibility of a situation in which appearance is at least as important as politics.

—In all the papers the writing is free of the dogmatic flavor of copy designed to fit into a predetermined perspective. Journalists continue, as before, to emphasize different subjects according to the paper for which they work.

Are these changes in style merely, or are they fundamental? Peru is seeking to develop an advocacy press, but how does the Miro-Quesadas' old paper, *El Comercio*, represent the interests of the peasants if they can barely read it?

El Comercio, the theory goes, is best able, because of its international prestige, to defend the peasants' economic interests (cotton and wool prices). Within the country, the paper acts to strengthen and unify agrarian reform. But most important, the new ownership has provided a forum for those most removed from the sources of communication.

In its initial stages, the transfer of power appears to be working. Along the wealthy boulevards of the Miraflores district in Lima, hopes of a popular boycott are fading. *Ojo*, the largest morning daily, has actually increased its circulation 12 per cent since the changeover. The cafés where the wealthy students thronged in the days of protest over the expropriation are still crowded, but the papers they read over their espresso no longer belong to their families. □

AS WE WERE SAYING

THE NATION IN 1876

WILLIAM PEIRCE RANDEL

In superficial ways *The Nation* has changed markedly since 1876. Issues that year averaged 16 pages, compared with 32 now; but with no cover, no titles in headline type, no cartoons or advertising, with a slightly larger page size, smaller type and less space between lines, total wordage approximated that of today. There was no masthead listing editor and staff. Reports on the Centennial Exhibition and occasional letters to the editor were signed by initials, but these were the only evidence of outside contributions. The most significant difference between *The Nation* of 1876 and any periodical today is that much if not most of each issue was, apparently, written by a single individual—the editor, Edwin Lawrence Godkin.

Born in Ireland of English parents, Godkin came to the United States in 1856, at age 25, to study law, but quickly resumed his earlier career as newspaper correspondent. In 1865 he founded *The Nation* as a liberal independent weekly, one that owed its high repute and wide-ranging influence to his personal integrity, his intellectual breadth, his clear and careful reasoning, and his mastery of the English language. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Godkin *was The Nation*, especially in the analysis and commentary on passing events. He was not negatively neutral; he strongly opposed "free silver," high tariffs, and territorial expansion, and was an aggressive champion of political reform, but he never pandered to the sensation-loving public by adopting the lurid style then common among news editors, most of them openly partisan, to gain circulation.

In their first issues of 1876, editors generally echoed the exuberance of the Centennial New Year's Eve. Pride in achievement since 1776 and optimistic predictions for both the year and the second century it was to open were splashed in print across the nation. Godkin, whose first issue of the year was dated January 6, did not join the chorus; he observed, instead, that the United States had gained "enormously in political force and importance," but, except for abolishing slavery, had not "maintained its moral and social pre-eminence among the nations." Instead, there had been retrogression, especially in governmental administration; and to blame this on the influx of ignorant foreigners, as some apologists did, he dismissed as disingenuous. Newcomers, he insisted, had played a major role in the expansion of wealth and power.

"The foundation of this government is, and always has been, the capacity of the people to see things as they are," but this faculty had been long in decline, reviving only with the evidence of rampant official corruption since 1870. Only now, he suggested, were citizens "waking up to the fact that republican institutions, like others, do not work of themselves, and cannot be so constructed as to serve for all time." This awakening was welcome, for it would almost certainly prompt "a vigorous effort to regain the ground we have lost in all that relates to the administration of justice, the punishment of crime, the collection and disbursement of taxes, the procedure of legislation, and the protection of property against the taxing power of persons who have no interest in it."

The exposure of Secretary of War Belknap as a grafter, early in March, was the first major sensation of the Centennial Year, but for Godkin it was only an illustration of the general decline in public morality. "Belknap's fall," he wrote, "is nothing but a symptom of a disease from which not he but the whole body politic is suffering." Corruption was of course evil, but worse, as Godkin saw it, was the general complacency of the population: people *knew* of the wrongdoing of recent years but "persistently refused to deal with it." Dishonest behavior "has been wrought openly, notoriously, and on a great scale, under the eyes of the nation, and wrought with so much impunity that politicians have at last acquired brass enough to defend it, as part and parcel of American polity."

But even though knowledgeable citizens deserved blame

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for their apathy and silence, Godkin singled out for sharpest reproach the Man in the White House. "The crisis came when an ignorant soldier, coarse in his tastes and blunt in his perceptions, fond of money and material enjoyment and of low company, was put in the Presidential Chair." Grant was ultimately responsible, Godkin insisted, for "the rotten system" that for the last five years had been converting the government into a robber's den. Belknap, guilty by his own admission, was only a conspicuous victim of that system. He was gone, but the system remained, and voters had an urgent duty in the Centennial Year to mount a revolution of reform.

A week later Godkin demolished a fairly widespread notion that corruption resulted from affluence and would be eliminated by a return to the simplicity of life in 1776. "There is no connection. No man or woman is kept from knavery by wearing homespun and living on pork and beans." A more practical course would be to pay higher salaries to top federal officials, since the prevailing salaries were not attracting the best men. Yet some men seemed wholly devoid of principle. One of these, in Godkin's opinion, was James Blaine, Congressman from Maine, who aspired to the Presidency and who illustrated our "failure to produce men equal to the demands of the time."

The sensational partisan journalism of that era was hardly to Godkin's liking, yet on April 22 he saw fit to defend his profession and justify its behavior. Despite some errors in detail, the newspapers "have been almost always correct in their charges." What public figure accused in the press of misconduct, in the past decade, "today stands before the world completely vindicated?" Clumsy as reporters had often been, their service was one of great value. What might help still more, he suggested, was even closer newspaper scrutiny, turning up facts of how much money every candidate had, and how he had acquired it. Such information would help the next President replace venal men with others who were honest and effective, chosen for their fitness for the job. The sorry alternative would be that instead of mastering his appointees, the man elected in 1876 would, like Grant, become their puppet.

Publication of the platforms of the two major parties saddened Godkin, who found them pieces of "turgid rhetoric, abounding in glittering generalities, and carefully avoiding any distinct and definite promises." A platform, to be anything more than "a display of fireworks" by means of which professional politicians amuse the public, ought to "describe with reasonable accuracy not only what the party proposes to do, but *how* it proposes to do it." Because reform of the Civil Service was by far the most important issue in 1876, the method proposed for the reformation, Godkin felt, should be clearly spelled out. A good party platform for the Centennial Year, indeed, would need no other plank.

In his May 25th issue Godkin outlined "A Centennial View of 'Practical Men.' " The leading figures of the Constitutional Convention—Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson, Jay, Madison—were both practical and wise, but by the political standards of 1876 they would be the laughingstock of convention managers, "sneered at as visionary and impractical by most of the party newspapers. And yet the problems of government are still substantially the same that they were in their day." Modern politicos *act*; learned men only *talk*. What Centennial America needed, desperately, was a revival of the old fusion of learned talk and effective action. Without such a revival, the basest men could pass themselves off as statesmen. Boss Tweed had done so, and while this was amusing, he had as much right to the label as Morton and Cameron and other "practical" men currently in power.

A group known as the American Alliance offered its own prescription for the diseased body politic: restrict all government offices to native-born citizens. As an immigrant himself, Godkin was contemptuous of this recrudescence of nativism. Tweed, Gould, Butler and most of the other most notorious politicians were all native-born, he reminded his readers, and added, in a rare moment of sarcasm, "If we must choose between the Boss and the Pope, let us by all means have the Pope."

Whether the great issues of 1876, as Godkin identified and discussed them, have receded in the second century, or yielded to fresh ones, may be debatable. The recently mounted drive for open nominating conventions would no doubt please him. On June 29, under the title "The Sham of Conventions," he suggested that the choice of candidates and other major decisions were handled as in horse racing when the owners arranged with jockeys the order of the finish. He proposed as a first corrective step the barring of all officeholders from conventions and all other political activities. A second step would be to enlist more of the nation's scholars in the process of decision making. Because 1876, "besides being the Centennial Year, is a year of widespread purification and of considerable and not unwholesome retraction, apology, and self-condemnation," intellectuals were essential for the help they could provide in the self-study effort. Professional politicians of course were aware of the wholesome potential results that enlisting scholars would produce; hence their loud and frequent deriding of scholars as mere talkers, less effective than undereducated, "self-made," practical men.

Cool toward the New Year's exuberance, Godkin held consistently aloof from the mindless celebrating of a century of independence. He deprecated the grandiloquent oratory of the Centennial Fourth of July as offering nothing about the current state of the nation. Speakers, he intimated, might better have spent their allotted time proposing ways "to make constant and steady improvement in every branch of political machinery." Given the common impulse to celebrate the nation's first great birthday, this comment may be taken as illustrating Godkin's idealism. On a more practical level, he also deprecated the method of selecting a "dark horse" Republican candidate: the "Half-Breed" faction of the party wanted Blaine, the "Stalwarts" could not abide him, and the only solution was to compromise by naming Rutherford Hayes, Ohio's lackluster Governor. Godkin had nothing against Hayes, but wondered in print whether he would be strong enough for the needed governmental reform. The acceptance letter that Hayes issued soon after the convention was reassuring; Godkin may not have known how much it was influenced by Carl Schurz, who shared his own firm views about reform and sound money, but it removed much of his doubt about Hayes's potential effectiveness. The pledge Hayes made to serve one term only was rather disturbing, however; four years seemed to Godkin too short a time to

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reform the government, and he hoped that Tilden would not make a similar pledge.

A midsummer event that disgusted Godkin was the Senate's acquittal of Secretary Belknap. The vote, largely along party lines, was 35 to 25, a handful short of the two-thirds needed to convict. "The Senate," Godkin wrote on August 3, "has finished the Belknap case in a way which will be satisfactory to nobody except Belknap and his counsel. They have certainly succeeded in making the 'High Court' and all its surroundings so ridiculous that impeachment is not likely to be resorted to for a long time." Since Belknap had confessed his guilt five months earlier when he submitted his resignation to Grant, "his escape is a mockery. . . . All the proceedings were thoroughly *bouffe*, and they could hardly have made it more so by music and a dance by all the company at the end."

No Senator could have believed Belknap was innocent, but several honestly thought they lacked jurisdiction after Grant accepted the resignation. It was a typical Grant action, Godkin thought; it was not the first time the President interfered with due process to benefit a friend. "One of the saddest things in General Grant's career is that he will never make his conduct square with his friends' theory of his character." Earlier in the year, Grant had given his private secretary, Orville Babcock, another federal post instead of dismissing him outright after he was exposed for complicity in the Whiskey Ring. The man who broke up the ring, Treasury Secretary Bristow, fared otherwise: Grant dismissed him in June. Postmaster General Jewell, another man of integrity, was also dropped from the Cabinet. Good men existed but were out of place in an administration permissive of corruption. But rascals were not limited to Grant's official family: after T.H. Huxley's New York lectures in September, Godkin applied the Darwinian concept of natural selection to Ben ("Beast") Butler, calling him one of the most vicious animals in the entire zoo of Republican grafters.

As the Centennial Year neared its close, Godkin was cautiously optimistic about the disputed election—which wasn't finally settled until the very eve of inauguration the next March. Like other thoughtful citizens, he was bolstered by the knowledge that whichever candidate, Hayes or Tilden, was declared the winner, he would be a great improvement over Grant. Godkin saw Tilden as much the stronger, with extensive executive experience as Governor of New York and a sound mastery of fiscal management. His successful campaigns to destroy the Tweed and Canal Rings, and the bitter enmity of the Tammany crowd in his own party, were plusses in Godkin's political accounting. But Hayes was equally committed to reform and not likely, as people feared Tilden might be, to favor the Southern War Claims that would be a serious drain on the Treasury.

Hayes had able advisers, especially Carl Schurz, but the effort to put him in the White House was almost entirely pre-empted by Grantist leaders whose only desire was to maintain the Republican Party in power. Hayes could do nothing about it; he was close to being a helpless bystander. Indignation was widespread in both parties when Grant sent troops into South Carolina, ostensibly to maintain order but actually to influence the recount procedures; for Godkin, it was clearly an impeachable action. On December 21 he asked editorially, "What is Mexicanization?"—a term briefly in vogue just then to describe the use of force in settling elections. The Democrats, he conceded, were also guilty of improper acts, especially fraud, but theirs was not "judicial fraud," and there was no justification for "a legally organized judicial body to use fraud, a thoroughly Mexican idea. . . . The Anglo-Saxon view," he continued, "is that to lawlessness you oppose *law*, first, last and always." And he concluded that "a self-respecting and manly people, capable of carrying on a great government, . . . will never seat a knave at the drumhead or convert the acts of the thimble-rigger and mock-auctioneer into defenses of order and liberty."

The electorate was not without blame, however. Godkin, on December 7, reminded Republican voters that "it is through you the wrong has come, if wrong there be, and it is to you, therefore, that the country looks to see—much as it may cost you—that right be done." But in the final issue of the year, on December 28, he absolved those voters, shifting the blame to "a small knot of ambitious and unscrupulous men" who had succeeded in rekindling the fires of hate while resisting reform. Good citizens, moral and patriotic, were helpless now and could only watch the tricksters silently, like crowds watching gladiators in an ancient Roman arena; but as they looked on they enjoyed the assurance that whoever won the prolonged contest would restore integrity to the Presidency. "If there were nothing behind this, . . . he would be a bold and sanguine man who should look forward to another centennial anniversary of republican government, such as we know it and prize it."

Evil times were sobering and chastening, Godkin reflected at year's end. He was not the first to entertain this idea, or the last, but as it applied to the Centennial Year he was distinctive for expressing it at the time, not after the dust had settled. "The most glorious periods in [Anglo-Saxon] history," he wrote, "have been those in

Leslie's Weekly, April 8, 1876

Uncle Sam to U.S. Grant: *"Here's a Pass. So Now Take Your Offspring and Go West, Old Man!"*

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which everything seemed going wrong, in which the devil seemed to be let loose, . . . when traitors, conspirators, cheats, and profligates seemed to have laid firm hold on the machinery of justice and on the public force." The current citizen calm and patience, he thought, reflected a deep unbroken confidence in our form of government. It was hardly an easy time to live through, but, "if we are not greatly mistaken, this crisis will appear in history as one of the illustrations and proofs of American political capacity."

Historians, with their varying temperaments and philosophical bases, have interpreted the Centennial Year and the twilight of Grantism in differing ways, but most of them accept Godkin's contemporary view that the American people, even in the worst of times, stop short of violent revolution and work things out by peaceful means. Most of them also, with their great advantage of perspective in time, interpret the events of 1876 much as Godkin did in the pages of *The Nation.* To anyone well-grounded in the Grant period, accordingly, reading Godkin's editorials, week by week, can offer few surprises. For what he thought and wrote, with his wide knowledge of history and his powers of analysis, not to mention his stylistic talents, was on target to a degree rare in journalism. *The Nation* in 1876 not only provided its readers with judicious interpretation of what was happening that year—the intention of any editor—but continues to provide, in its bound volumes on library shelves, a record of the Centennial Year seldom approached in the works of historians. □

NUCLEAR ENERGY

A PROBLEM, NOT AN ANSWER

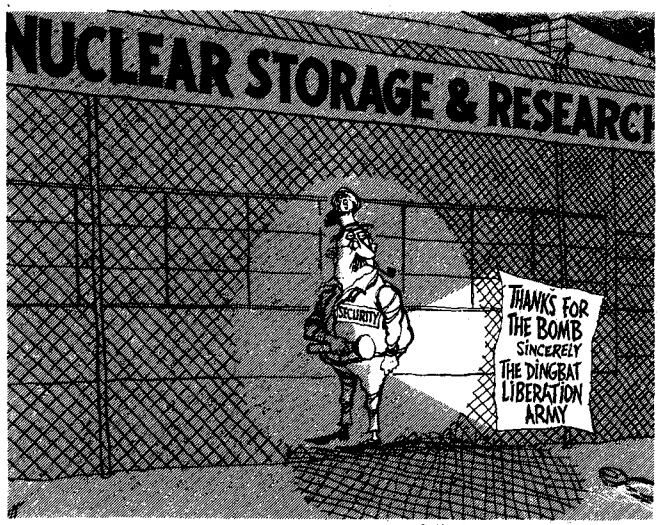
MIKE EDELHART

In the public statements of the nuclear establishment the numbers are solid, the cost projections firm, the growth curves lofty, the fuel predictions bountiful. Unfortunately, when one leaves the aseptic world of statistical studies, a gap develops between the impression of a smoothly running technology—the clean, cheap, virtually inexhaustible peaceful atom—and the actuality of a badly confused, uncertain development.

Numerous factors that are coming to bear on nuclear power plants in the field have been skipped, ignored, forgotten, misinterpreted, or baldly excluded from the reports which have served as stepping stones into the Atomic Age. Nuclear proponents haven't lied to sustain the momentum of atomic power. Instead, they've followed the more elusive course of wrapping selected, educated opinions in the cloth of fact. To be fair, the anti-atomic plant forces have used the same tactic. On balance, however, the opponents come out ahead, if only because the official position assumes "fail-safe": the nothing-can-possibly-go-wrong factor. And no one can deny that, on the job, much *has* gone wrong with power plants.

In the area of safety in particular, a startling difference can be noted between the theoretical performance of power plants and their actual record in the field. The following set of circumstances, for example, has only a one-in-a-trillion chance of happening, according to one interpretation of the AEC's Rasmussen study of potential nuclear power plant accidents:

An atomic plant worker, checking with a lighted candle for air leaks in cable couplings around the reactor core, accidently sets the cable sealant afire. Flames race along cable coverings, swiftly disabling power, telephone signal, coaxial, control, thermocouple and special control lines. A guard, alerted to the blaze, fails to dial either of two emergency numbers prescribed for the situation; instead,



Oliphant, Denver Post

he dials an unrelated employee, who then has to inform plant controllers.

Seven of eleven critical pressure relief systems fail. The control board begins to signal false information. Two systems for pumping vital water around the reactor core remain in operation; one of these fails. The coolant level drops from 16 feet to a mere 4 feet from the top of the fuel. A fire-fighting spray system can't be opened because nobody has the right kind of screwdriver. The facility must be shut down by hand, and the fire continues to burn for seven hours.

Despite the almost impossible odds, this fire actually occurred on March 22, 1975, at TVA's Brown's Ferry nuclear power unit. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission called it the second worst disaster in the eighteen-year history of nuclear power, following the partial core meltdown of the Enrico Fermi experimental breeder plant in Detroit in 1966.

That kind of event makes the safety figures which purport to apply to it look ridiculous. Obviously, the Brown's Ferry crisis developed in ways that had virtually nothing to

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do with the mathematical prediction of its impossibility. Somewhere along the chain from theory to design to production to construction to operation, variables had crept into the mix and stirred things up unexpectedly.

What kind of factors might these be? The insurance pool which underwrites Brown's Ferry recently stated that the fire stemmed from poor design and maintenance which, if continued, would result in "a loss beyond imagination." A spokesman also reportedly said that five of the twenty-three plants covered by the consortium contain similar errors. Such design problems at Brown's Ferry included cables which ran under the control room floor, and which filled the command center with heat and smoke during the fire. The AEC and nuclear contractors also missed similar potential hazards in earlier units. In November 1972, for instance, an anonymous letter awoke the AEC for the first time to the danger of permitting main steam pipes to pass directly beneath the control rooms of some models.

Another example from TVA's atomic program shows how amazingly far design blunders of even the grossest nature can proceed without being spotted. Reactor cores sit inside huge concrete cylinders, balanced on concrete pads. The pads for TVA's Sequoyah facility were in the wrong places. This was discovered only after the containers had been completely finished and the cores had been lowered into them by a giant crane. The reactor cores had to be laboriously pulled out again, and millions of dollars and months of redundant work went into tearing down and rebuilding the concrete jackets.

A TVA mechanical engineer said of the incident: "This was a major design error. It cost a lot of money. If we can have something this big go wrong and nobody notices it until it is too late, it seems inevitable to me that some time we will have an error in the design of safety-related equipment."

After the plans are drawn, other bugs can enter the system in the form of unregulated changes made during construction, often on the sole authority of field personnel. A nuclear civil engineer explained:

> For one reason or another, 10 per cent of the things we design up here don't work out in the field. So, the construction people do what we call "field routing." They change the location of pipes and conduits and other things. This means that as much as 10 per cent of the details in the plant don't come from the original design at all but from a construction man's head. I've never heard of information being routed back to us after these changes for us to evaluate their safety and efficiency. The designs are great on paper, but the design and the plant are two different things.

However, the biggest factor in the margin of safety isn't the machine but the men who run it. The Alabama fire was caused by human misjudgment, and it was kept from galloping forward into catastrophe by human capability. While official studies deal almost entirely with the fallibility of the mechanical components of nuclear plants, the reaction of the operators more than anything else spells the difference between disaster and anticlimax.

All of this is not to say that power plants are unsafe. It does, however, argue strongly that reactors can't be failsafe, and that statistics and industry statements which imply that they are go beyond logical justification. Conversely, some anti-nuclear groups have stated flatly that atomic units *are not* safe. They have no more basis for making that claim than the industry does for saying they are foolproof. In short, one can say only that the interior of atomic plants in performance is an unknown quantity.

Consistent overestimation of and fudging with safety predictions cause damage primarily because the public gets shortchanged. Once, when she was head of the AEC, Dixy Lee Ray said that the chances of a major nuclear accident were less than one in a billion. A statement like that sounds good but means little. Wittingly or not, such assertions prevent the public from gaining an accurate view of the situation. Even Norman Rasmussen, the man who devised the system upon which almost all nuclear power safety figures now used are based, recently said, "Nuclear power plants have not performed with the degree of reliability we would expect from machines built with the care and attention to safety and reliability that we have so often claimed."

As the Environmental Protection Agency wrote, in an unusual attack on the work of another federal bureau (specifically lambasting the AEC report on emergency core cooling systems): "Unamplified, it includes an inappropriately supported statement regarding class 9 accidents (the largest nuclear mishaps), therefore depriving the public of a quantified prospective on the risks being taken relative to this category." In nonbureaucratese, that means the public could be getting a trick cigar.

However, plant safety is not the only important issue. Here is a review of some other notable areas where development of the atom for energy has fallen short of expectations; they will probably become steadily more important to the continuing debate.

Evacuation. In theory, areas around nuclear power plants have effective mobilization plans for their populations in case of a major accident. In practice, such has not often been the case. At Brown's Ferry, the Civil Defense coordinator for Limestone County—the man responsible for removing the people potentially threatened—told the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC): "I heard about the fire at Brown's Ferry on the morning of March 24, 1975 [two days after the fact]. No one in the Civil Defense system notified me or attempted to do so." The county sheriff heard about the blaze "after it was over."

The town of Waterford, Conn. has had similar experiences. In two separate cases, radioactive waste water was inadvertently spilled at the Millpoint power plant, near Waterford. In both instances, local officials were among the last to hear about the accidents, and generally not from plant sources. While these two leaks posed no significant danger to the community, they convinced local officeholders that existing channels of communication weren't working.

As with most phases of the nuclear discussion, there is a distance here between expectations and what has happened in the field. The Rasmussen study estimated that 90 per cent of the population contiguous to a nuclear power plant could be evacuated within eight hours. E. Erie Jones, director of Illinois' Office of Civil Preparedness, on the other hand, has stated a fairly typical pragmatic position: "We think we have a good first draft for the Zion [a major

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power plant site] area. But to tell you we have an acceptable plan for all the nukes in this state would be a blatant lie. Even the Zion plan isn't acceptable until it's been exercised with a drill."

Seismic Faults. In California, as you might expect, but in Eastern states as well, several power plants have been found to lie on or uncomfortably close to seismic fault lines. In at least one case, the power company definitely knew the instability was there before it began construction, and hid that information from the NRC. The commission assumes that a utility has satisfied itself that no dangerous geological formations lie near a proposed site before it applies to build a power plant there. In addition, the NRC is supposed to review the company's findings to make sure the proposed location is stable. In several cases, though, power companies have failed to find faults that were dangerously close to favored lots. And the NRC does not make its own geological study but works with the information the utilities furnish.

In California, evidence of a fault was found only 2 miles from Pacific Gas & Electric's Diablo complex. Prior to that discovery, plant designers had been convinced that the nearest crack was 20 miles away. Asked at the time if the newly discovered instability could jeopardize the unit, an AEC official admitted: "It's possible. . . ."

Back East, a fault was found to run directly beneath Virginia Electric Power Company's North Anna facility. While Virginia hasn't been geologically active in any serious way for some time, the power plant fault troubled scientists who knew of it. As J.F. Devine, a U.S. Geological Survey staffer told *The Washington Post*: "No one would be worried about earthquake possibilities if we weren't talking about a nuclear power plant . . . but we are talking about a nuclear power plant."

The company had studiously removed any hint of the fault from its application with NRC, going so far as to delete Neuschel's lineament, a principal geologic feature, from maps submitted to the commission. An environmental group jumped on the issue, and Virginia Electric ended up paying a $60,000 fine for "material false statements" before the licensing body. The NRC refused, however, to restrict construction over the fault, judging it to be inactive.

In a similar case, Dr. David M. Stewart, a geologist at the University of North Carolina, has claimed that the next big earthquake along the Eastern seaboard will probably be centered at the site of a Carolina Power and Light unit near Southport, N.C. He cites new evidence to indicate that within the foreseeable future eastern North Carolina will be the epicenter of a potentially catastrophic quake. CP&L contends that its preconstruction land surveys showed scant evidence of seismic activity, but Stewart and his supporters reply that the area's earthquake tendency was discovered with techniques developed since the plant was finished. The NRC, at the scientists' urging, has ordered CP&L to look further into the possibility that its plant may lie on a dangerous spot.

Money. Much of the impetus for nuclear plants has arisen from soaring projections of America's future electrical needs. In the recent past, when these tremendous increases were linked with then-current plant construction costs, uranium prices and efficiency estimates, atomic plants looked quite the handsome investment.

Over the past year, American electrical usage has risen only 1.7 per cent. Companies which had based their nuclear plans on much greater increases, find themselves saddled with expensive plans to produce electricity their customers may not need, or at least won't need as soon as expected. As a result, according to an industry-related journal, *Engineering News Record*, 24,000 megawatts of atomic power orders were canceled between March 1974 and March 1975.

An example of the current economic squeeze comes from Middle South Utilities of Louisiana. Floyd Lewis, the holding company's president, explained its problems: "Our decision to cancel two nuclear units and defer construction on another was simply a question of our ability to finance them and the pattern of use of electricity in recent months by our customers. . . . Our peak load this year was three-tenths of a per cent below that of 1974, and came in April instead of August for the first time in twenty years."

Duke Power, of the Southeastern states, has revised its estimate of electrical demand over the next fifteen years downward by 1.5 million kilowatts, and has postponed for two years ground breaking on two important nuclear installations. The Tucson Gas and Electric Company, as a third example, has sold its percentage of Arizona's atomic power development to South California Edison for $7 million, citing lowered use projections as the reason.

Diminished use curves wouldn't have such industry-wide effect if they weren't linked to staggering, inflationary cost overruns in plant construction. Middle South's plants were figured to cost $1.3 billion in 1973; in 1975, the price had leaped to $2.3 billion. A few years ago, the Midland power complex in Michigan was expected to open in 1974 at a cost of only $349 million. By the summer of 1974, the price had nearly tripled, to $940 million and the unit's start-up date had been pushed back to 1980. Then, on April 15, the estimated cost jumped again, to $1.4 billion, and completion was kicked back yet another year. Over this course, Midland went from being one of the cheapest light-water reactors ever conceived, to being one of the most expensive—all before it had ever been built.

In addition to inflation, the ultimate operating costs of nuclear facilities have been bedeviled by an elusive figure called a "capacity factor." This percentage compares the amount of power a plant could theoretically produce with the amount it actually does produce. At present, no one can be absolutely certain what the true capacities of nuclear plants will be. Several estimates have been made, but few of the nuclear units have been in operation long enough to verify their performance. As might be expected, though, friends and foes of the plants are far apart on this question. David Comey, a highly effective anti-nuclear researcher, has produced a factor of 50.4 per cent of the possible power, based on intensive computer evaluations. Sacramento Municipal Power, on the other hand, assumed a capacity figure of 80 per cent for its proposed Rancho Seco installation. Coal plants average in the 60s and 70s. The capacity factor is crucial in determining the eventual cost to consumers of electricity from any facility. A hard and fast average is necessary to determine if nuclear plants are actually cost effective with coal-fired and other types.

Uranium Problems. The current dreary economic picture and uncertain cost status of atomic plants will

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surely be made even worse in the next few months by the development of an even bigger drawback: Uranium, the lifeblood of nuclear reactors, is getting both unmanageably expensive and increasingly hard to find. This new problem was the principal reason for the recent scuttling of South Carolina Electric and Gas Co.'s V.C. Sumner plant, Unit 2. The utility announced that it just couldn't find an "acceptable" supplier of uranium ore.

The seriousness of the uranium situation was pointed up in September when Westinghouse, manufacturer of about 40 per cent of the world's nuclear plants and the largest single supplier of uranium, announced that it was going to limit fuel shipments to customers, and cut off service altogether after 1978. The company took this action in direct defiance of contracts it had signed with reactor firms over the past ten years. Westinghouse defended its action by claiming that a little-noted section of the Uniform Commercial Code allowed it to abrogate contractual agreements for the company's general health. While the legality of the argument has yet to be tested—angry power companies are lining up, suits in hand—there is no doubt that Westinghouse's uranium program has been bleeding the company white.

It got into the uranium business in the first place as a way to sweeten power plant deals. Customers who invested in a reactor were assured of an adequate supply of fuel at cheap, stable prices until 1992. But the price of uranium has more than quadrupled, from $6 to about $26 per pound. So Westinghouse has been losing its shirt selling the stuff at unnaturally low prices. Now, it has decided to provide only 18.75 per cent of ordered amounts until 1978, after which it will close out its uranium business. Irwin Stelzer, a utility consultant, remarked that the Westinghouse cutback "puts the whole nuclear program up for grabs."

It looks as if the grabbing will get increasingly frantic in the years ahead. Nuclear expert Ralph Lapp has pointed out in *Fortune* that, whereas the United States will need four to eight times the current known reserves over the next twenty-five years, to carry out the nuclear power program now projected, no new major American uranium producing areas have been identified in seventeen years. Such an irrefutable shortfall, many in the industry feel, will lead to an eventual requirement for significant uranium imports to meet national demand. Uranium *is* found widely across the globe. However, if America were forced to use foreign supplies of uranium, much as it now draws on Middle Eastern stores of oil, the country would be subject to the same kind of cartel economics that drove it to nuclear power in the first place. Already, a group of uranium producers calling itself the Uranium Producers Forum, has held meetings and adopted a strikingly noncompetitive pricing structure.

The one alternative to boxing ourselves into an atomic corner, hardly better than the petroleum fix we're now in, is the liquid metal fast breeder reactor, which produces more nuclear fuel than it consumes. But the breeder has been attacked by environmentalists, who think it too dangerous, and by scientists, who fear the ramifications of an economy based on the unmatchably toxic substance, plutonium. The government has de-emphasized breeders because of the controversy, and the odds of America having a breeder capability of any size within fifteen years are slim and getting slimmer.

One of the strongest original arguments for atomic power was that, in spite of the high construction costs, uranium fuel was so cheap that it kept overall investment on a par with other energy systems. However true that was when first proposed, it no longer has any touch with reality. If atomic plants are to be cost effective in the immediate future, it must be on the basis of using a hard-to-get, dearly priced fuel. Few people think nuclear facilities *could* favorably compete under such circumstances.

World Safety. The expansion of atomic energy throughout the world—in addition to increasing pressure on limited supplies of uranium—may involve serious dangers for international stability. A study recently published in *Harvard Magazine* concluded that nuclear war will almost certainly erupt before 1999, but that the antagonists, initially at least, won't be the United States and Russia but two smaller countries with recently acquired nuclear capabilities. However, if small, unstable nations obtain nuclear weapons, it can only be because current members of the nuclear community gave them the raw materials. Obviously, no reasonable state would give away A-bombs, but many countries are currently involved in the worldwide dissemination of nuclear power facilities. The United States is giving power plants to Egypt; West Germany is selling them to Brazil; France is reportedly even considering the sale of a nuclear waste-recycling plant to South Korea.

In at least one case, that of India, nuclear material provided for peaceful development was used to produce an atomic blast. Yet the U.S. Government insists that power plants are an effective and safe tool of foreign policy, a token we can bestow upon governments we deem solid and reasonable. It emphasizes that bomb uranium and power-plant uranium are far removed from each other, and that very few nations have the capability to "enrich" uranium to bomb purity. The process is so expensive and complex, and requires such enormous amounts of raw ore, that only countries with huge military needs and budgets have been able to develop it. That would be fine if the situation were static, but it is not. In fact, the expense and intricacy of nuclear separation may already be an obsolete assumption. Earlier this year, teams in Russia and the United States independently discovered relatively simple, cheap ways to enrich uranium with lasers.

With this development, the nuclear situation reaches perhaps its bleakest impasse, where it becomes impossible, given the world's current state, to find a clear demarcation between the peaceful atom and its warlike twin. Power plants aren't innately harmful devices, but when a connection develops, no matter how tenuous, between them and bombs, their loudly proclaimed purity is sadly besmirched.

Ralph Lapp, who believes in the development of nuclear power, unwittingly pointed up the basic paradox of the atomic question when he wrote: "It is probably no exaggeration to state that the economic vitality of the nation in the year 2000 will hinge on how well it solves its nuclear power problems." Nuclear problems? Atomic power was supposed to *solve* the problems we face today with fossil fuels. We have ended up, it seems, playing an energy Zen game—solving a puzzle with another puzzle, even more confusing than the original. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—It's Not Easy

AMBIGUOUS LEGACY: The Left in American Politics. *By James Weinstein. New Viewpoints-Franklin Watts. 179 pp. $9. Paper $4.95.*

RONALD RADOSH

Writing some seven years back, Christopher Lasch argued in *The Agony of the American Left* that radicals who centered their political activity in reform politics were only helping to create more illusions about the political process in America. Challenging Michael Harrington's belief (of that time) that socialism would take over the Democratic Party without anyone's realizing it, Lasch maintained that a radical consciousness could only be created through a political organization which embodied that consciousness and called things by their right names. A new socialist party, he suggested, would have to be formed. Its job would be to "introduce socialist perspectives into political debate, to create a broad consciousness of alternatives not embraced by the present system, to show both by teaching and by its own example that life under socialism would be preferable to life under corporate capitalism, and thus *in the long run* to fashion a new political majority."

When Lasch wrote those words, the old Left had already become a political ghost. The New Left, soon to join the company of the old, ignored the historian's advice. Its most articulate spokesmen would soon be advocating nihilistic actions in support of Third World guerrilla movements. Much later, after the failure of that approach was manifest, some of the same New Left leaders ran for political office within the Democratic Party, as advocates of a vague and poorly defined "Populism." Those 1960 radicals seemed to be agreeing with a position long held by a certain variety of liberal—that America had reached the end of ideology, and that socialism was a meaningless doctrine in a liberal capitalist society.

James Weinstein does not share that view. He maintains that social disintegration, economic insecurity, poverty and inflation cry out for a socialist solution as well as for a movement to propose it. Weinstein writes his new book out of the conviction that "the political basis and the social need for a socialist movement exist today as it has for the last century." What he seeks to explore is why the conscious political Left has not been able to meet this social need through the creation of a viable radical movement. In doing so he offers a short guide to the Left's recent history, from the pre-World War I Socialist Party through the contemporary New Left.

Weinstein is most sympathetic to the effort of the old Socialists to make socialism a major public issue in America. But their party was developed during the earliest stages of the growth of monopoly capitalism, and the Socialists did not foresee that the capitalist system would be able to make economic and social adjustments that would mitigate some major inequities. On the basis of their conviction that capitalism could in no way be reformed, the Socialists assumed that the struggle to unionize workers to that end must precipitate a final crisis.

The American Communist movement brought to birth a party whose leaders pursued a path that exaggerated the Socialists' weaknesses and displayed little of their characteristic strength. The Communists preached the inevitability of Bolshevik insurrection, fostered the romanticism of a conspiratorial underground and formulated immediate demands without any mention of the need for a different system. They insisted, moreover, that the party had to be composed of a small elite, thus guaranteeing that there would be almost no effort to develop consciousness of the need for socialism among broad sectors of the working class. Subordinating their goals to those required by the Soviet-dominated Comintern, the American Communists between 1927 and 1934 (the Third Period) broke all ties with non-Communist liberals and Socialists, and tried to build dual unions in the labor movement.

Weinstein ably details the various horrors resulting from Communist strategy in this period. On the eve of political victory against the John L. Lewis bureaucracy in the United Mine Workers during the 1920s, the Communists broke with the coalition of dissidents, and sought to build a dual National Miners Union. The party's effort split the opposition, and assured Lewis's continued control over the miners. Capitalism, the party told its followers, was bound for immediate collapse in any case.

At the same time, the party did not support transitional programs that might produce a struggle for the popular control of society. They offered only an abstract appeal to emulate the Soviet Union. On the economic front, the Communists believed that militant struggle on behalf of workers' immediate needs would somehow become a revolutionary movement pointing the way toward a Soviet America. Workers would defend their own interests on the job, while social priorities—decisions for society as a whole—would be the concern of the party exclusively.

The impact of events in Europe eventually forced the Comintern to ditch the disastrous policies of the Third Period and to initiate the popular front. "In the Third Period," Weinstein writes, "the Communists had sacrificed popularity for an ahistorical socialism," while during the popular front, "they sacrificed even this socialism for a transitory popularity." Previously despised liberals were now praised as worthwhile allies in the defense of bourgeois democracy. Those the Communists had once branded as "social Fascists" now became sought-after allies in a front defending capitalist democracy. The party gave up its attempt to build dual unions, and began to gain strength as a result of its selfless participation in the industrial union movement.

But their policy in the new CIO was based upon maintaining an alliance with liberals and union officials. The Left-Center bloc was based upon a subordination of socialist ideas, in return for the union leaders' toleration of the Communists. The strategy of the Third Period had changed, Weinstein reveals, but not the party's assumptions. During the Third Period, the Communists had isolated themselves from the mainstream of organized labor, and had tried to forge dual unions. During the popular front, the party built unions that integrated labor into the system, and they forbade any criticism that might have interfered with the alliance with liberal and union bureaucrats. During the 1920s the AFL held power over labor while the Communists stayed pure in sectarian isolation; during the popular front they joined the CIO in the mainstream and gave up a struggle on behalf of an independent class politics.

In both cases, the Communists did not see fit to raise the issue of the necessity of socialism in America. The leaders always believed that activity on behalf of immediate demands would mysteriously create socialism as an issue at some unspecified

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future date. It was necessary to unite against the threat of fascism—a threat that was actually nonexistent within the United States. The reason socialism never emerged as an issue, Weinstein says bluntly, is that "the Communists never put forth a serious socialist position for which to argue as an alternative to the New Deal," and they did not "attempt to organize a popular party for socialism." Rather, they deferred to the Russian demand to create a common front with liberals against fascism.

Hence, the popular front began to dig its own grave. The Communists' public positions could not be distinguished from those of most left-wing liberals. The party even sacrificed rank-and-file militancy to keep the support of the CIO leaders. This did not save the Communists within the union movement. Once the CIO was accorded formal recognition by the state, its regular leaders no longer required the organizing skills and other services offered by the Communists. And since the party had never created a political base in the unions nor developed a socialist consciousness among workers, the purge of Communist leaders met with little resistance from rank-and-file workers.

With the onset of the cold war, the popular front itself came to an end. The Soviet Union found itself facing an American capitalism strengthened by the war, a development that would make America's Communists the victims of a new popular front against communism. The Communist leader, Earl Browder, had been arguing naively that a stable world capitalism would move selflessly to a period of coexistence with Soviet Russia in the spirit of Teheran. The Communists, he argued, had to work to keep up that spirit by means of an alliance with liberals. Even the bourgeoisie, Browder argued, had a class interest that coincided with the national interest of the American people.

Browder's theories were challenged by the old Communist stalwart, William Z. Foster. Capitalism, he retorted, had grown weaker internationally, and World War II had enhanced the aggressive nature of American imperialism. Rejecting Browder's attempt to support a policy of making capitalism work with the least burden on the people at home, Foster maintained that a new World War was likely, and might start with actual military conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Foster may indeed have been correct in his judgment of America's postwar imperial appetite, a phenomenon denied by Browder. But I think that Weinstein is wrong when he claims that "Foster's views more nearly reflected world realities than did Browder's." Weinstein leaves out the second part of Foster's argument—that World War was both inevitable and perhaps imminent, and that it would coincide with American capitalism's imposition of fascism at home. As Weinstein himself points out elsewhere in the book, the belief that the American state required fascism was a major theoretical weakness shared by all the Communist leaders. And this theory allowed the Communists to make their main activity defense against the new McCarthyite "fascism," rather than any effort to build a movement for socialism.

Hence, Foster's new line did not really change the approach taken by the party. Foster too saw socialism as something for the future, a development that would take place as a response to Soviet success. The Communists did not even break with the theory of the popular front. Instead, they now sought to build one with liberals out of power—the Henry Wallace Democrats—putting advocacy of socialism in the back room in the interest of unity against an anti-Soviet foreign policy. It may be true that unity with anti-cold-war liberals made more sense than the wartime popular front, but in both cases, Weinstein notes, "the ideology of the alliance was liberal."

The popular front had worked out better for the Communists in Europe. French and Italian Communists had led their own nation's wartime resistance, while the bourgeois leaders either capitulated to or acquiesced in fascism. The end of the war found the Communists in a position of strength. But in the United States, the alliance against fascism had been led by bourgeois liberals, and the Communists had cooperated on the liberals' own terms. Indeed, they often tried to curb labor and black militancy on behalf of a united war effort.

The cold war and a new Soviet foreign policy finally forced the Communists to break with their cherished Left-Center bloc. They could no longer countenance neutrality on foreign policy issues within the unions. When they insisted on condemnation of the Marshall Plan, they forced a rupture with the CIO leader, Philip Murray. The Communists then had no choice but to try to organize a third political party, regardless of whether such a step might isolate them from organized labor. As the Communists took the initiative in breaking with the CIO leaders and liberal Democrats, they hastened their own demise. Their officials who had gained prominence in large unions put their unions first and abandoned the party. And the Communists still offered no vision of what socialism would mean in America, except the example of Soviet Russia. When popular revolt in Hungary was boldly suppressed by the Russians in 1956, any basis for holding up the Soviets as an example for a possible American socialism crumbled. The Communists entered a stage of permanent decline.

The 1960s saw a resurgence of protest, and the birth of what appeared at first glance to be a New Left. With a decentralized structure and an emphasis on participatory democracy, the young people involved disowned the "democratic centralism" grafted onto old Left bodies as an inheritance from the Soviet experience. Yet their gospel of opposing all ideology often led to rule by small personal elites; the New Left saw its own *groupuscules* as the vanguard of change in a corrupt and backward nation. Weinstein also shows that there was tension between those who regarded themselves as a legitimate part of a new revolutionary movement and others who saw themselves as privileged members of a white middle class, who had to atone for their guilt by offering support to the struggle of black and Third World revolutionaries—the only true rebels.

The New Left's most articulate leaders even took a leading idea from the old Left—the search for a key sector in society that would become the sole agent of revolution. To the old Left that sector was the blue-collar working class. To Tom Hayden, it was at first the ghetto poor in black cities like Newark; later it was the Vietnamese. Arguing for selfless effort on their behalf, Hayden and others played "upon the worst characteristic of the New Left, its guilt"—since middle-class students could supposedly have no genuine stake in a radical transformation of society. With this development, the New Left was on the way to failure:

> To most new leftists, socialism remained a dogmatic, bureaucratic, "old-fashioned" idea. Thus, as new leftists became "revolutionaries"—came to understand that corporate capitalism had to be rejected—they had no concept of an alternative social system. In that situation, New Left politics became increasingly negative. The form of its activity, rather than a comprehensive political perspective of a positive program, became a mark of how "radical" it conceived itself to be.

Few could beat the "radical" militancy displayed by Weatherman, a group whose performance, David Horowitz wrote, was a "hard act to follow"; that is, until the arrival of the Symbionese Liberation Army. The New Left did organize the earliest protest against the war in Vietnam. But once liberal Democrats moved into the forefront of opposition to the war, it became impossible to conceive of anti-war activity as being in itself a form of effective opposition to the system as a whole. SDS, once the most promising of the New Left groups, "bypassed their own history and development in order to become rootless, detached shock troops for other people's revolutionary movements."

The most negative consequence of the New Left's own ideology, Weinstein argues, was that it abandoned "as unprincipled any attempt to organize a socialist movement among white Americans," preferring

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to have whites support revolutionary actions by supposedly more oppressed groups. But when these groups themselves failed to act in the manner prescribed by Weatherman, the latter chose to function on their own as suicide squads that would give cover to the desired activity of black urban guerrillas.

Hence, movement to build a meaningful Left ended with a sense of frustration and a politics based upon guilt and despair. Theory functioned as window dressing for isolated acts of mindless adventurism. The decision of the New Left to adopt "Leninism" was not a step that acknowledged the need for developing a socialist perspective and policy; it contradicted the historical lesson that people had to show awareness of their own oppression, and that popular participation in social decision making was central to a meaningful socialist politics. The remnants of the New Left now posited the need for an elite vanguard (much like the Third Period Communists). They too believed that the revolution-bearing element was the blue-collar workers, and they stressed armed action as a proof of true militance and revolutionary ardor. Weinstein fails to discuss their new grouplets—the Maoist Revolutionary Union and October League, the National Caucus of Labor Committees, the once independent *National Guardian*—but it is clear that he considers all these bodies to be part of the disintegration of the New Left, rather than part of the birth of a new socialist Left.

It is Weinstein's hope that his own study will help develop the forces committed to making socialism a major political issue in the 1970s and 1980s. He would no doubt agree with Christopher Lasch about the need to create a party with "a coherent program and strategy for change, a theoretical understanding of post-industrial society, and an alternative culture and vision." Is it too much to hope that as we enter a new decade and celebrate our nation's Bicentennial, the American Left will begin to take a serious look at our country and its own history, as the first necessary step toward the realization of the socialist dream? □

Ironies of John Ford

JOHN FORD. *By Joseph McBride and Michael Wilmington. Da Capo Press. 234 pp. $12.95. Paper $4.95.*

THE WESTERN FILMS OF JOHN FORD. *By J. A. Place. Citadel Press. 246 pp. $12.*

RICHARD PETERSON

With a career that spanned almost the entire history of Hollywood as a center of the film industry, John Ford was one of the most consistently popular American directors and remains one of the most important. The world view expressed in his films generally dealt with the historical past—the American past; in particular, Ford immersed himself in moments of crisis and dynamic flux. Primarily concerned with the incidental episodes of significant historical eras, those films reconstructed the American Dream and portrayed its disintegration. Ford's interpretation of these events as memories infused with emotion has long been the subject of debate.

Unfavorable criticism of Ford's work has been made on the basis of an analysis of theme as well as an analysis of form. His detractors often cite what they regard as his sentimental attachment to the military and his Irish-Catholic concern for ritual, tradition and family values, which they take to be symptoms of a reactionary political consciousness. On the simplest level, such criticism assumes that Ford's long association with the actor John Wayne suggests a close relation between Ford's narrative themes and a particular political position. Beyond that, Ford's reputation as a genre director—most particularly, a director of Westerns—and the importance of the genre itself are questioned. Formally, as a Hollywood product, his work and its classical strategies have even been condemned by criticism informed with a reductionist historical determinism: since his films were made within the studio system, they must reflect the ideological concerns of the corporate leaders who own that system (see Noel Burch and Jorge Dana's discussion of "codification" in narrative cinema, reprinted in the British magazine *Afterimage,* No. 5, Spring, 1974). Even the editors of *Cahiers du Cinéma,* in their analysis of *Young Mr. Lincoln* (reprinted in the British magazine *Screen,* Autumn, 1972), while disowning a "vulgar Marxist" view of direct causality between art and its socio-historical context, fall into the determinist trap. It is interesting, in the context of all these arguments, to consider that Ford once acquired the status of a "liberal" in this country because of *The Informer* (1935) and *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940), his two films

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that have earned the most critical acclaim. But the answers to the charges briefly sketched above do not lie in this or that political label—nor do they lie specifically in those two films. The relationship between a work of art and its socio-historical context is complex; all critical methodologies—whether or not they refer systematically to that context—must ultimately come to terms with the individual intelligence expressed in the work.

Two significant books have recently surfaced that argue on Ford's side of the controversy, though they do not address themselves to all of the questions raised above. Joseph McBride and Michael Wilmington's *John Ford* and J.A. Place's *The Western Films of John Ford* are loving analyses in which the director's control over his work is assumed. Extremely "auteurist" in their methodology, both inquire into Ford's individual interpretation of ideas rooted in the American consciousness. They are selective about the films that are discussed—the latter book because of the focus expressed in the title—and they are primarily concerned with the films made from 1939 onward.

Ford had directed films since 1917, but in 1939, with *Stagecoach* and *Young Mr. Lincoln*, his handling of his material began to show the impress of an increasingly complex manner. *Stagecoach*, especially, signaled the development of a double formal and thematic system that Ford was to pursue throughout the rest of his career. His lighting and composition of the interior sets amounted to a more mature application of the expressionistic stylization he had used in *The Informer*; they also established strong relationships between his characters and their physical works on the open plain. In Monument Valley, straddling the Arizona-Utah boundary, that Daliesque wonder of jagged peaks and plateaus that shadow barren desert land, Ford found a natural dream landscape that is simultaneously epic and psychological, one that suggested infinite expansion and yet could reflect his progressively more complex and interiorized attitudes toward the West. Out of these two basic models—the naturally sculptured landscape and the products of human social forces—Ford created, in Andrew Sarris's words, ". . . a double vision of an event in all its vital immediacy and yet also . . . [as an] ultimate memory image on the horizon of history."

Ford's "memory image" became more bitter and ambiguous through the years, and doubts about civilization and westward expansion became more pronounced in his work. The authors of both books cite Henry Nash Smith's *Virgin Land* (Harvard University Press, 1950) as a text with which much of Ford's work can be read in this connection. Ford's West, in its adaptation of 19th-century Western mythology, is informed with conflicting values. Both a garden and a wild, primitive universe, the Western landscape is juxtaposed with civilization—signifying the family, tradition, religion and a corrupting, decaying force.

J.A. Place follows that outline more closely than McBride and Wilmington. Following the philosophical grid that Jim Kitses draws from Henry Nash Smith in Kitses's admirable study, *Horizons West* (Indiana University Press, 1970), Place sees patterns of the mythology referred to—tensions and oppositions—in the American consciousness and in Ford's work. Within this design, she approaches each of Ford's Westerns individually, pinpointing their thematic conflicts. Although her thesis is built upon these oppositions, she never defines them as dialectical (which Kitses suggests they are). Perhaps it is the lack of some such organizational principle that allows the text to ramble. In any case, she has looked at the films very closely, her descriptions of events and images are perceptive and her conclusions seem sound.

"The popular arts of our age," Place writes, ". . . in their finest forms appeal to emotions." And she finds in the tensions that she describes the source of Ford's great emotive power. That is reasonable, and Ford's effect upon his audiences' emotions needs to be acknowledged. However, her sometimes idiosyncratic interpretations of Ford's narrative situations fail to recognize the irony in them.

McBride and Wilmington do emphasize the ironic detachment that underlies many of Ford's most intensely romantic films, and therein lies their greatest contribution. Despite the loose structure of their book (most of the essays have appeared as individual articles in film magazines), they attempt an overview of Ford's career, and make judgments about forces operating in Ford's own personality. In one of the book's best passages, they trace a line between the ideological content of *They Were Expendable* (1945), a wartime film, and *My Darling Clementine* (1946), Ford's first postwar film and a Western. The sense of propagandistic necessity and the lack of historical perspective in the war film are carried over into *Clementine*, so that the latter is Ford's most solemn Western, endorsing "militarism as a social principle." Place notes the particularly unambiguous nature of the same film's "law and order" message but, unlike McBride and Wilmington, does not suggest its position in relation to other works (*Fort Apache*, 1948, *The Searchers*, 1956, and *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, 1962, not to mention many non-Westerns) that undercut the notion of a consistently strict moral line throughout Ford's career.

In her discussion of *Fort Apache*, Place misses the significance of its most revealing moment. In this film, Henry Fonda plays a cavalry officer in command of an outpost during the Indian wars. A martinet who believes in force in dealing with his troop and the Indians alike, and obsessed with visions of personal glory, he is finally killed with his men during an unjust attack upon the Indians. Fonda's second in command, John Wayne, a sympathetic figure who had opposed his senior's ruthless methods, has succeeded him. In an interview with newspaper reporters, Wayne distorts history, describing his dead commander as a hero, and then leaves to take his men on another mission (presumably against the Indians). But as he goes he dons the fanciful European forage cap that Fonda had worn throughout the film.

In Place's reading, this passage endorses an individual's assumption of mythical duty toward the military order. However, as McBride and Wilmington point out, Ford's attitude to that order is a critical one. Though the newspapers will print the legend, Ford has shown us the fact (as he will in *Liberty Valance*). In his ritualistic assumption of the cap, Wayne embraces the qualities that it had symbolized in Fonda's character: egotism, insensitivity and political opportunism. Because the cap complicates our identification with the Wayne character and forces us into a position of detached observation of the event, McBride and Wilmington suggest that it can be regarded as a Brechtian distancing device. No doubt a thorough structural comparison between Ford and Brecht could result in as unjust a confrontation as Fonda's with the Indians. But the analogy has some value, if only to illustrate a certain complexity in Ford's view of the world.

The depth of Ford's art is revealed in moments like this, in which the narrative temporarily halts, and strikingly composed visual relationships between the characters and their environment (the wilderness or the military fort) alter the audience's relation to the events. The symbols that shape this environment—the cap in *Fort Apache*, the opening and closing of the door of civilization in *The Searchers* or the anachronistic "cactus flower" in *Liberty Valance*—suggest the ironic paradoxical side of Ford's creative personality.

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A detailed examination of Ford's use of irony could bring about a revision of some of the conclusions reached by means of the critical methodologies outlined at the beginning of this essay. Those approaches are useful and necessary, but their interpretation of Ford's political attitudes need to take account of his images and signs as structures of dialectical tensions. Such an analysis would show Ford's work to be ideologically complex. Place emphasizes the value of studying imagistic details, and McBride and Wilmington suggest the subtle readings that those details can support in terms of Ford's *oeuvre*. However, since all three authors deal with his work episodically and fail to carry their analyses to general conclusions, they leave work to be done. But they do indicate directions in which Ford's supposedly reactionary thematic and formal strategies can be re-evaluated.

Ford's politics seemed clearly reactionary to some when he appeared at the American Film Institute tribute to him a few months before his death in 1973. Richard Nixon accompanied the feeble old man onto the stage and proudly declared, "I've seen every film John Ford has ever made." Apparently no one had told him that many of the early films are lost forever. In any case, Ford could only exclaim, "God bless President Nixon!" Ford may not have remembered *The Last Hurrah* of 1958, in which he parodied the Checkers speech as televised political burlesque. Or possibly, on that stage, he may have made his last ironic statement. □

Another Great Good Place Going

DANCERS IN THE SCALP HOUSE. *By William Eastlake. The Viking Press. 245 pp. $8.95.*

JOHN FRIEDMAN

New Mexico has been a fount of inspiration to many writers. D. H. Lawrence, Willa Cather, Paul Horgan and Oliver La Farge were among those moved to write about the land and its people. But most writing about New Mexico has focused either on the beauty of the landscape or events of the frontier period. One of the few authors to write about the Indians of the present is William Eastlake. The former owner of a ranch in Cuba, N.M., Eastlake is most sensitive to the language and life of the Indians. His novel deals with a fundamental conflict in the Southwest, the struggle between those who want to despoil the land —speculators, bureaucrats, drive-in entrepreneurs—and those who want to preserve it—the Indians and a few Anglos.

Dancers in the Scalp House is the story of some Navajos and an Anglo couple who are trying to prevent their homes and way of life from being washed away in the waters of a new dam. The story gathers force as it broadens into the larger theme of the spiritual death of white Americans.

Unlike his earlier books about New Mexico, which include *Go in Beauty*, *The Bronc People* and *Portrait of an Artist with Twenty-six Horses*, Eastlake's latest novel is more fanciful than realistic. The story is populated with an assortment of people and situations that are closer to Vonnegut than to Hemingway. Among the characters, really caricatures, who encroach upon the Indians in northern New Mexico are: Maharishi Marakech, a Perfect Yogi and 16-year-old Zen Master; J. D. Cooper, a skyjacker; Adrian Fox, a leader of a vigilante group and former sociology professor at Harvard who believes that Indians should be treated with benign neglect; Eugene Genovese, a film director who dabbles in transactional analysis; and The Measles, a rock group from England.

In addition, there are brief appearances by the President of the United States, the Governors of California and Texas, the FBI, and even Billy Graham. Arrayed against these representatives of modern society are a handful of Indians, including Looks Important After A Rain, Hosteen Begay and When Someone Dies He Is Remembered, who is the medicine man. Helping the Indians is Mary-Forge, an Anglo schoolteacher, and William William, an author and rancher who lives with Mary-Forge in the Scalp House.

Eastlake uses the confrontation between the Indians and white America to jab at parts of American society that he considers ephemeral and pernicious. For example, the Playboy clubs are represented by a huge outdoor advertisement of a naked, neon girl which is torn down by the Indians, and the Governor of California wears a small sign advertising Disneyland, "a parlor of entertainment in California."

In contrast, the Indian way of life

John Friedman is editor of the literary review, Shantih.

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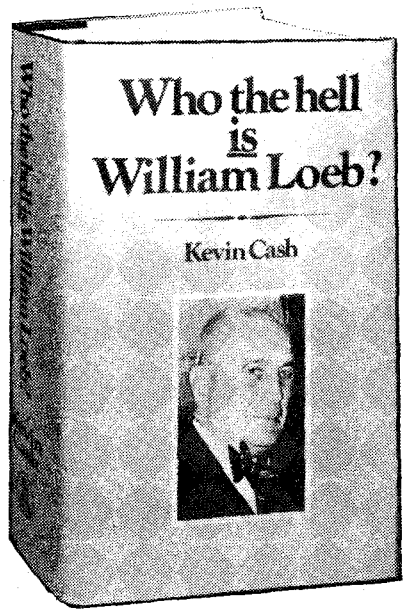

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is described as a function of the natural order, shared by the eagle, the coyote, the sun and the moon. The Indian world "is a circle that contains all the rhythms of the poetry of life." It is a "continuity in time and place and person."

Caught between the world of the whites and the world of the Indians is Tom Charlie, called Thomas Charles by the whites. He is described as the "man who did not know who he was." Tom Charlie symbolizes the dilemma faced by most Indians: whether to accept white civilization and lose an important part of themselves or reject white civilization and remain outcasts from the larger American society.

Tom Charlie has studied nuclear physics at the University of New Mexico and worked at Los Alamos. He has developed a secret weapon against the dam, a nuclear bomb. Much of the plot revolves around "the gift," as it is called, and whether the Indians will use it. The medicine man makes the strongest argument against its use, an argument to which Indians have had to turn for centuries. The bomb, the medicine man says, "would kill many Tom Charlies as well as many Thomas Charleses. This we cannot allow. There is no hope or purpose in life . . . [if we fall into imitating] the others' way."

But the dilemma of the Indians is related to the lives of all Americans, Eastlake suggests. Mary-Forge believes that progress is a disease that has "clouded the human heart and covered the earth with signs and hid all of the beauty therein." The struggle between progress and nature becomes a struggle for the soul. The plastic men in the novel have died spiritually and they are determined to add the Indians to the casualty lists.

The alternative to dying spiritually is to dance in order to abjure "all the dead ends of thought." In a symbolic voyage of death and discovery at the end of the book, Eastlake combines the landscape of New Mexico with his inner vision. He describes this "undiscovered country" as "a perfect wilderness before civilization, before death . . . a smogless sky, all the world a dance of light where all was beginning, nothing ever ended, because the undiscovered country is the delight of cold morning sunrise; it is truly the ecstasy and somber fulfillment of the human spirit in watching the sun come down. . . ."

Eastlake continues: "The undiscovered country is love and compassion and an inkling into the sufferings of others and the smack of lightning and the tintinnabulation of a small rain on the hogan roof and the joy in the feeling for life. The undiscovered country is not the complications of and dismay at life's problems but the ease and wonderment at life's mysteries."

Anyone who has watched a New Mexico sunset or ridden in the high country or sniffed the scent of piñon is likely to share Eastlake's hope that progress will never destroy the "undiscovered country." While not all are fortunate enough to have caught the spirit of the Navajos, like Mary-Forge, it is possible to regain "the part we killed in the Indian and in ourselves."

Drawing on the belief in the power of nature to rejuvenate us spiritually, Eastlake is following in the tradition of Chateaubriand and Wordsworth as well as Americans such as Thoreau and Whitman. The theme is still important today. Unfortunately, some of the comic passages in the novel dilute the theme. The reader is tempted to dismiss the antics of the characters with a wry smile, and that response can easily be transferred to the novel's profounder elements.

In *Go in Beauty*, Eastlake wrote that "if the Indian Country ever fell to the advancing ravages that civilization called progress," he would set it all down. *Dancers in the Scalp House* is a continuation of that effort, the recital of a "dream, a white nightmare, a phantasmagoric and contemporary white frolic and farce in which the Indian is victim and buffoon to the white man, but played out on the real Indian land, not stage, of Indian heritage and hope." □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

Following the mode of his moving and intellectually fascinating *The Wild Child*, a picture based on 18th-century French accounts of the discovery and nurture of a "wolf boy," François Truffaut has filmed *The Story of Adele H*, the tragic history of the obsessive love of Victor Hugo's younger daughter for a philandering British lieutenant of hussars. Like the earlier work, it is based on contemporary documents, principally the letters and diary of Adele Hugo, the latter edited by Frances V. Guilie.

I find myself somewhat troubled to deal justly with this picture. It is superbly made, Truffaut having applied his full skill as a director and compassion as a man to set before us the torments of a young woman (not, however, quite as young as she appears here) who was driven by a passion she was much too inexperienced to restrain. She had been made love to, she had been seduced, by Lieutenant Pinson, and we may find it hard to appreciate what that would have meant to a girl of Adele's upbringing in the 1850s. She had given herself to the man, and nothing—not her family's alarms, not Pinson's brutal coldness, not the ample evidence of his narcissism and moral triviality—could persuade her that their union was dissoluble. She followed him to Halifax, where his regiment was stationed during the American Civil War, and later to Barbados. She threw herself at him, in love, in anger, in horrifying abnegation; she pleaded, threatened, schemed and cajoled. The coxcomb was unmoved, and on their last encounter, in a by-street of Bridgetown, her mind had been so overwhelmed by pain that she did not even recognize him. Her reason fled, and she never regained it, though she lived to be 90.

All this is performed—with superb modulations of pride and despair, canniness, naïveté and the wildest grotesquery—by Isabelle Adjani of the Comédie Française. It is one of the most taxing roles I can remember, and under Truffaut's direction, her performance never falters. The camera work, by Nestor Almendros, is masterful. Set almost entirely in small interiors, rich with dark, gleaming wood and with earth colors in subdued lights, the photography echoes the closeted fever of Adele's preoccupation. I doubt that monomania could be more vividly or respectfully evoked on stage or screen.

Yet, having said that much—and saying now explicitly that the film is an event not to be missed—I must add that it is also remote and in the end disappointing as theatre. That is so, I think, because Truffaut chose to tell history entirely from the subjective viewpoint of Adele's obsession. Almost by definition, that is a narrative incapable of development. There is no contest, no weaving of complexities, no growth of understanding. It charts as a straight line, descending from desperation to madness. The action is so absorbed in the heroine that the others in the cast seem supernumeraries. Pinson (Bruce Robinson) is little more than a handsome model for military attire, and the girl's well-wishers —a boardinghouse keeper, a bookseller, a bank clerk, a cab driver, an old black woman in Barbados—are given so little to do that their performances are banal and sometimes gauche.

To a considerable degree, of course, this absence of the complexity and tug of opposition that might have given the film depth is imposed by the facts—not all true stories lend themselves to drama; this one might better have been danced than acted. Yet I think more could have been done. Pinson surely felt something, however base; he could have been elevated at least to the stature of villain. And there are hints in the film—for example, an idolized older sister

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was drowned with her newly wed husband, and one feels it may not have been easy for a girl to develop emotional stability in the shadow of the world's most famous man—to suggest that forces other than her passion were playing on Adele. She had two brothers; one wonders why neither came out to Halifax to care for her.

However, this is Truffaut's film, and he made it as he thought best, considering the materials at hand. It failed to involve me as I was involved by *The Wild Child*, but it earned my respect.

By coincidence, another film that opened recently in New York also deals with a young woman who is destroyed by her determination to cling to a man whom she scarcely knows. It is *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*, made by the German director, Volker Schlondorff (*Young Torless*), from what I guess to be a polemical novel by Heinrich Böll. It stars Schlondorff's wife, Margarethe von Trotta.

This film certainly does not lack the dimensionality of conflicting goals, melodramatic incident or editorial stand. Its purpose is to show how the heroine, innocently caught up in a criminal investigation, is hounded and besmirched by callous police officers working more or less in cahoots with the ace reporter of a scandal sheet. The circumstances:

A young man, thought to be a member of a terrorist organization, is under police observation. It is festival time in Cologne, and to evade his followers he mingles with a group of merrymakers (one of them a police officer in Arabian masquerade) who carry him along to a party where he encounters Fräulein Blum. They fall in love at first sight, dance together and go off to spend the night at her apartment. But in the morning, when the police burst in (eight or ten men carrying submachine guns and looking like executioners in their protective masks and aprons), he is gone and she refuses to say how or where.

In fact, he has gone to ground in the country cottage of a wealthy industrialist-politician; Katharina had the key, because the man is her "protector." She also won't divulge this relationship and, by covering it up, convinces the police that she has long been the mistress of the wanted man. Katharina is grilled, threatened and cajoled by the gang squad; snooped on and humiliated by the journalist, whose stories are splashed down the front page of his paper, day after day. She is soon dismissed by the police, but her reputation is destroyed; she hunts up a revolver and murders the journalist. The film ends with an unctuous graveside eulogy by the reporter's boss, who acclaims the democratic virtues of freedom of the press in phrases so dripping with complacent hypocrisy that they might be taken as provocation for a general smashing of the city's newspaper plants.

It is a graphic, fast-paced yarn, employing the talents of a cast that looks interesting and acts convincingly. But as an exercise in social behavior, it bites off more than it can chew. What moral are we to draw from the misadventures of a young woman who beds a man for a night and, having decided that he is the love of her life, frustrates the attempts of the police to catch up with a fugitive they have good reason to detain? Katharina is known among her friends as "The Nun," but she is scarcely that; rather she is smart enough to keep her affairs to herself. She earns a good living as the extremely upper-class servant of a wealthy couple, and obviously is a girl skilled at making her way. True enough, yellow journalism is abominable, but the picture's strong implication that the press should be put under restraint does not necessarily follow. Somewhere in the picture a cop suggests to Katharina that she is encouraging her journalistic nemesis by her own behavior. That is cruel if you assume she is trapped in a passion beyond her control, but Katharina Blum is no Adele Hugo, and people who refuse to help the police in their legitimate searches can expect a rough time. The West German police (with some individual exceptions) are shown to be menacing and indifferent to the pain they cause, and if that is so, it is indefensible. However, I got the impression that I was being worked on by people who were skilled at placing the emphasis where they wanted it. And Böll is sometimes thought to let his heart run away with his head. □

DANCE

NANCY GOLDNER

In Martha Graham's new *Scarlet Letter* Nureyev plays Dimmesdale as a soft, suffering poet. When at the ballet's very beginning he pulls open his black clerical shirt to reveal the letter A, his torso and neck yield to the pain of his guilt. He's already saved; he must only reveal himself to the public. Peter Sparling, taking over the role after Nureyev's three-week stint with the Graham company, is a veritable Reverend Casaubon. The letter written on *his* chest almost strangles him; the burden of wearing it beneath his clothes cracks, rather than bends, his body. Sparling has the courage to turn a hero into an unlikable character—a situation that rubs against Nureyev's grain, I suspect, and certainly against the grain of typical ballet plots—and his determination to move consistently in an unpleasantly rigid way is eminently suitable to Graham's theme and to the one interesting dance of the ballet, Dimmesdale's spastic, finger-pointing sermon. Before I saw Sparling do it, it seemed contrived. With Sparling, it was appropriately awful and alarming.

Like good novels, Graham's good ballets are about character first, society second. Except for the sermon solo, Graham's *Scarlet Letter* is about society, specifically about the bad old Puritans. I cannot think of any other Graham work in which individuals have been cast in such a subservient slot and in which the Puritan aspect of life becomes not only the whole of life but so one-sided in its aspect. Graham's villagers are downright Klanners; I even thought I saw some hooded capes painted into Marisol's rendition of hell's flames, which forms a fitting backdrop to Graham's mood. Fire and brimstone have occupied Graham in many of her other ballets. They play a large part in *Letter to the World*, in the person of the huge zombie Ancestress who accosts Emily Dickinson whenever she is enjoying herself. It is represented by the revivalist preacher in *Appalachian Spring* who, like the Ancestress, likes to butt in on happy occasions and at happy times of year. If one enlarges upon the fire and brimstone ethic to include all kinds of personal guilt and all kinds of societal taboos, then one may also see Graham's mythical-historical heroines

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Poems by Ellen Bryant Voigt

THE FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE VIRGIN

MATINS

Felix rapina. *The flap*
and whistle of the angel's
wings, the public birth,
the chastened motherhood.
When they led her from her son's
cruel scaffolding, she wanted
no more miracles. Now this.
Plucked up to heaven, a pressed
flower—her body is used
for a million statuary.

NONES

The church sweats in its dark stone.
The triptych, a pamphlet of roses,
flanks the altar. In one stained
panel of window, Joseph provides detail.
The madonna mourns from a nearby table;
one hand is raised
as if reaching for fruit. Among
the murmuring candles, a solicitor
spews his secret into her ear.

COMPLINE

Mary,
Holy Vessel, Queen of the Martyrs:
in the mountains of Zakopane

the rutted street swells
with women, bringing you flowers.
See how they cradle

the passionate blossoms. Precious
Mother, the village is blooming. Here,
in a row by the plain wood houses,

here, by the roadside,
the young girls are gathered.
Each wears white lace, hand-made

for marriage; each
is chosen, blessed by the father;
and when the bells release

a shower of pollen,
each mouth opens to rapture
like a wound.

THE VICTIM

Who could remember cause? Both
sought injury, and God knows
they were perfectly matched for pain.
Fenced into their landscape of passion,
each moved to the center and set upon
the other. Always, she would deploy
the tease, the jab, the deft tongue,
until his arm swung out on its hinge,
coming flat-handed against her face,
recoiled, then stiffened to thrust
his fist into her open mouth.
This was not the only violation.
When a child is struck by her father,
she crawls toward him, not away,
bound by habits not yet broken.

DAMAGE

It didn't suckle. That
was the first indication.

Looking back, I know how much I knew.
The repetitious bloodfall,

the grating at the door of bone,
the afterbirth stuck in my womb like a scab.

Others were lucky,
response was taken from them.

Each time I bathe him
in his little tub, I think

How easy to let go

Let go

ALL SOULS' DAY

Confronting frost,
the trees assume their attitudes of pain.
Who can think of the ocean?
its permanent surf, its violated sand.

She takes off her glasses,
folds them into their tapestry
envelope. After coffee,
after she straightens the kitchen,
after her T.V. program,
she is going to pray for the children.

Scarved and suited for autumn,
she will stand, as in the park,
where they are gathered, that each
may sail his little sin into temperate waters.

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as transcending Puritanism. In *Seraphic Dialogue* Joan of Arc discovers that her heresy against society, religion and her own femininity entitles her to sainthood. The nameless female protagonist in *Errand into the Maze* learns that the only fear is fear itself. She needs but recognize the existence of the man-monster to stand her ground. Once having done so, she dispatches the monster and renders her hastily constructed labyrinth an obsolete weapon. The One Who Seeks in *Dark Meadow* learns to view sex as a natural event, like the blossoming of flowers. Clytemnestra and Medea (*Cave of the Heart*) attempt to redefine notions of justice. Horrible deeds occasioned by sexual jealousy have in them a poetic splendor and justice; they may even be just. Only in *Night Journey*, about the Oedipus-Jocasta love story, does Graham leave awful deeds awful.

The mythical women's contests with Puritanism are thrilling and believable, a case where a seeming misapplication of theme flashes into rightness through a very personal application. But Graham's application of Puritanism to the ballets where it most rightly belongs, in the American ballets, raises skeptical eyebrows and undermines her reputation—or if one wants to get nasty about it, her aspirations toward a reputation—as an intellectual. Those menacing members of Dimmesdale's world are trite. The Ancestress who falls like an ax between Emily and her lover is not only a silly melodramatic device but a permanent deterrent to our understanding of Dickinson as a great artist. *Letter to the World* becomes the history lesson we had to suffer through in grade school. One reason for *Appalachian Spring*'s ideological digestibility is that the Puritan aspect is seen in rational, sometimes humorous, perspective. The preacher plays a prominent role, but the bride cannot resist dancing while he's preaching. The husband's eyes are on the horizon, mostly. Even the pioneering woman, a one-unit chorus whose concerns and allegiances are broadest ranging and least personal, sees fit to interrupt the preacher's hot sermon with quiet prayer. *Frontier* also is notable and refreshing for its absence of the Puritan shadow. In this solo from 1935 the protagonist both enjoys and struggles against the spaciousness of the frontier. Noguchi's set, a fence supporting two ropes that fly up and out toward both horizons, makes one feel the space, and the heroine's dance makes you see the space. Space would seem the most sensible subject for Graham's American dances, and *Scarlet Letter* would have been more honest in content and interesting as dance had lack of space, a theme Graham touches upon in the duet for Dimmesdale and Hester, emerged more specifically than it did.

Graham's month-long season in December went a good way to help audiences make coherent sense of the immense Graham canon—to find common themes among uncommon ballets, important differences among the relatives; to reassess ballets one thought one hadn't liked and had liked, and to find out what Graham is up to these days. Not much, it would seem. As already indicated, *Scarlet Letter* catches her mind at its Achilles' heel. *Point of Crossing*, about a conflict between two brothers as manifested by the women they choose, is literally unmemorable. Having seen it in mid-December, already I cannot remember what anybody did. Not really a piece of choreography, *Adorations* is a demonstration of Graham technique. As proof that there *is* a Graham technique, *Adorations* is perhaps a useful educational tool, but something has gone wrong when a dance class is more entertaining than a dance. It is interesting only as a sign of the public's desire to go backstage and of Graham's willingness to allow them access.

Naturally, one question rising out of the season concerns Graham's future as a choreographer; more crudely posed, when did she stop choreographing? Besides the revivals of old ballets (*Lamentation*, 1930; *Frontier*, 1935; *Herodiade*, 1944; *Dark Meadow*, 1946), two relatively new ones were revived this season (*Acrobats of God*, 1960; and *Circe*, 1963). *Acrobats of God* twits the schoolmarmish teacher (once impersonated by Graham and now handed down to Linda Hodes) and her yen for resident studs (personified by gorgeous-looking Ross Parkes as the whip-cracking lieutenant). It hits too close to embarrassing truths to be funny. *Circe*'s structure is strangely lackadaisical and limp. It reminds me of the Bolshoi production of *Walpurgis Night*, in which satyrs and other colorful creatures hang about on stage and whip into an occasional variation when the orgiastic spirit hits them. That leaves *Seraphic Dialogue* as the most recent extant work of unquestionable substance. (*Clytemnestra*, 1958, is questionable.) Graham made *Seraphic* twenty years ago. That's a long time, and it's still hard to assimilate that fact into my image of Graham as a contemporary creator.

The Greek ballets have sometimes been regarded as Graham's fall from grace—from stark, simple power, her American power if you will, to a more neurotic, gussied-up style. In these ballets, Graham stepped into another woman's body, whereas in the nonmythical ballets she made her heroines step into *her* body. On this line of thinking, it might be possible to see her present preoccupation with external matters, like clothing and sumptuous theatrical effect, as a decadent extension of the already decadent *Cave of the Heart, Night Journey, Circe* or *Clytemnestra.* I suppose there's some truth in this theory—that, for example, the pioneer woman in *Frontier* or the grieving women in *Lamentation* has more power and integrity than the more exotic Medea. But this season I was overwhelmed by the luscious neuroses of the Greek heroines in their make-believe "landscapes." The connections, however plausible or implausible, between these ballets and the great literature of the world were superfluous considerations compared to the dance facts—the pure driving power of Medea's quivering body and especially the ferocious unison dancing of the chorus in *Night Journey,* those slithering snakes in black and screaming-purple sheaths, their hair almost pulled out of the roots into topknots, their throbbing, twisting bodies screaming warnings as Jocasta and Oedipus bed down. It's purple passion, I guess, but I'd take those overtly ulcerated qualities of movement any day to the vaguely ulcerated movement in *Diversion of Angels*, which is supposed to be about love, diversion and

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angel dancers, or to the vaguely repressed dances of Dickinson and the wrong-headed melodrama Graham puts her in. At the same time that Graham's endemic repression made *Diversion of Angels* for the first time impossibly distasteful, the subdued ecstasy—which is the other side of Graham's contracted, corseted technique—of *Seraphic Dialogue*, parts of *Errand into the Maze* and *Dark Meadow* drew me into the action as never before. Graham is still our great problem choreographer. Long may she cause trouble. □

WHAT IN US WOULD BE WISE

Behind us both, the hour
Busy on the wall, a busload
Of orators breaks apart,
Blots noiseless
In a high place where,
For all we may
Argue, what in us would
Be wise
Leans to that airy track
Down which, not yet, but
As we look away,
A leaf or
Nothing, both weighing enough,
Falls.

Thomas Johnson

ART

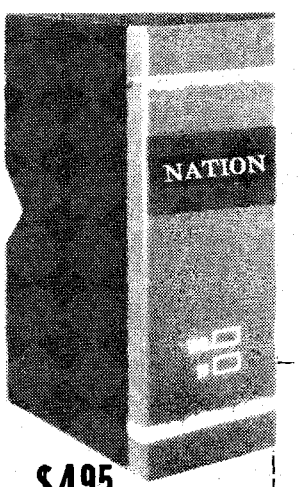
LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

The Arthur Dove exhibition at the Whitney Museum gives a clear sight of a steady and temperate painter with a great feeling for lived subjective experience. His starting point was early Kandinsky, whom he pruned as he developed his own nature-based abstraction. Barbara Haskell comments on his biomorphism in the well-illustrated book that accompanies the exhibition: "The womb and phallic images in Dove's work . . . evoke strong sexual overtones as was later true of Robert Motherwell's and Arshile Gorky's sexually charged imagery." Dove's "Alfie's Delight" (1929), for example, with its frayed mushroom heads and autumnal color, suggests Gorky's work of the 1940s. Haskell quotes Claes Oldenburg to the effect that eroticism is O.K., but omits to mention Dove's real heirs, the unfashionable painters William Baziotes and Theodoros Stamos (early work only). Dove's soft ovoids and wandering contours recur in their later biomorphic images, unmistakably organic in reference but vague and mixed in origin. National characteristics are never let alone for long, in art criticism or anywhere else. A good deal of effort has been expended on the Americanization of Abstract painting, usually by claiming analogies between the continental epic and the space of Abstract painting. Well, maybe, but verifiable recurrences, such as the nature and body forms in Dove (1880-1946) and Baziotes (1912-63) seem stronger candidates for native status.

In addition, Dove's work is characterized by centralized imagery, not geometric but with concentricities that suggest the human body in whole or part. Recently such configurations have been proposed as an intimately feminine form of expression. Georgia O'Keeffe, who owns a Dove of 1937, has been celebrated for just such organic images. Before we can accept centralist theory as an index of women's art, however, we need to distinguish it from apparently similar forms in men's art. Dove and O'Keeffe certainly have in common an American organicism, but a comparison of their uterine iconography would be a useful step toward the definition of women's art, to see if such imagery can in fact be biologically differentiated.

Louis Finkelstein, in the catalogue of "Painterly Representation," provides a text that discusses the sixteen works that make up the show. Circulated by the Ingber Gallery, it will travel to colleges and museums for two years. Each artist is represented by a single piece; they are new works, except for Mercedes Matter's which is fifteen years old and Elias Goldberg's which was finished in 1968. As Finkelstein observes, "there is of course representation and representation" and the form under discussion here is the polar opposite of Photo-Realism. Visible brushwork, as it connotes motor sensitivity and perceptual nuance, is the point, not a closed surface. This show has its roots in Abstract Expressionism: both Hans Hofmann and Willem de Kooning preserved figurative bits and pieces in their work and various painterly realists were acceptable at the time because of their conspicuous show of pigment. In this exhibition, Robert DeNiro and Matter come closest to that kind of painting, showing the space but not the objects of the world. Certainly Finkelstein has them in mind when he argues that gestural brushwork is "in considerable degree unanticipated and impossible to anticipate." That is the theory, but in fact it is impossible for an experienced painter not to anticipate; even surprises, when they occur, do so in a framework of the artist's choosing.

In the 1950s Finkelstein sponsored an abortive offshoot of Abstract Expressionism which he called Abstract Impressionism, by which he referred to the combination of landscape cues with a painterly matrix. In a sense this show is a continuation of that thought, not as a movement any longer but as the proper relation of artist, medium and the perceived world. It is "the flowing of consciousness in interaction with first the resistance and challenges which the world of appearances presents to our grasp and secondly with the ways pictorial language itself generates metaphors of the meanings of things and of states of mind." The show includes one of Nell Blaine's still lifes in which, as Finkelstein puts it, the flowers "form a kind of psychic complement to the palette." Several of the artists do not appear at their best because the size of the paintings has obviously been held down to facilitate traveling. However, small scale is natural to Herman Rose, one of whose roofscapes, 19 by 16 inches, steals the show. Rose is a neglected painter, though *Art News* in the 1950s (i.e., its Abstract Expressionist days) did what it could for him. His patient development, subtle color sense, and acute eye for tonal values deserve to be celebrated by more than the few who know him at present. □



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Crossword Puzzle No. 1615

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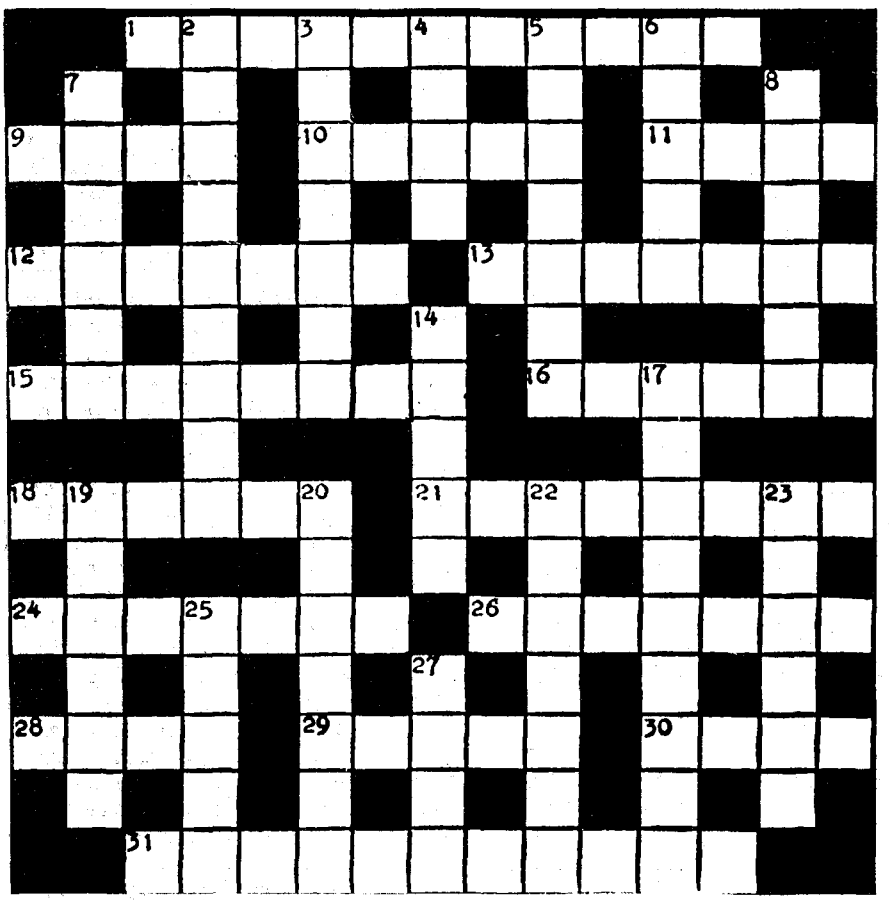

ACROSS

1 Possibly a puffed-up public message. . . . . (5,6)
9 and 29 . . . . .with the message for the widest public. (The service to me needs help, in retrospect.) (4,5)
10 and 5 down To help see what are raised in certain staged toasts? (5,7)
11 Bell-carriers for a fine lady. (4)
12 Somebody might suffer from exposure if one does, or possibly gets out of bed. (7)
13 What the lady referred to in 11 must have been (if unladylike) when traveling apace, as one might say. (7)
6 Ranges in pursuit. (6)
8 One who breaks in might find it easy. (6)
11 Put up with us, when turning to a very loud reed pattern. (8)
14 Spooner did, if old-fashioned, as the plug might have done. (7)
16 To summon one in case one hears a shower? (7)
1 What one might do in fetching the baby-sitter, remember? (5,2,4)

DOWN

2 and 8 He would be typical of it. (9,6)
3 and 28 across One might with an "Out of Order" sign, after presenting a statement of past good fortune. (5,2,4)
4 Killed in the past? Take a turn with the navy! (4)
6 13 has no instinctive impulse to revolutionize this plant. (5)
7 The money taken in around me is an important part of reproduction. (6)
8 See 2 down
14 and 15 across One might be responsible for the habit you may have acquired. (5,8)
17 10 changing into the strategic movement of troops. (9)
19 Auto with the top collapsed inside might hold you prisoner. (6)
20 Point to one who done her wrong, in general. (7)
22 A word of warning to prepare defensively is close at hand. (7)
23 Childhood rhyme mentioned No. Nine—for example, mixed with that number. (6)
25 It might be tacked on a jockey, perhaps. (5)
27 and 30 They might be limited inside to get them out of it. (8)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1614

ACROSS: 6, 25, 26 and 27 Mason and Dixon line; 9 Earldom; 10 Conform; 11 Yet; 15 Tempting; 16 Garret; 18 Expand; 20 Reunited; 23 Oats; 24 Cohort; 28 Tsarina; 29 Overtax; 30 and 1 across False eyelashes; 31 Decameron. DOWN: 1, 22 and 13 Every now and then; 2 Erratum; 3 Abdicating; 4 Homeland; 5 Secure; 7 Smother; 8 Nominated; 14 Mainstream; 15, 6 down and 12 The Coat of Many Colors; 17 Mesozoic; 19 Pitfall; 21 Tractor.

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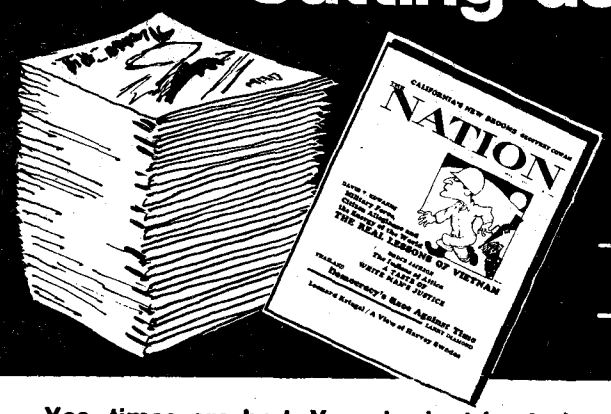

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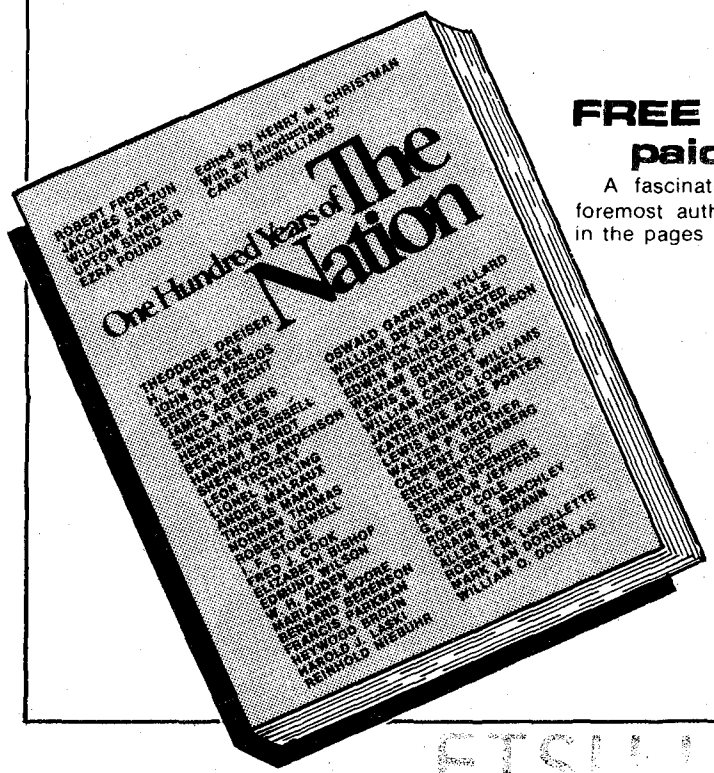

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